

---

## State Government Committee

---

### HB 2682

**Brief Description:** Allowing public officials to provide information on the impact of ballot propositions.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Sommers, Kessler, Van Luven, Edwards, Chase, Kenney, Darneille, Ogden, Schual-Berke, Santos and Kagi.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- State and local elected officials may use public facilities to prepare and deliver communications that provide information on the impact that ballot propositions may have on matters that fall within their responsibilities.

**Hearing Date:** 2/7/02

**Staff:** Catherine Blinn (786-7114).

#### Background:

State and local elected officials and their employees may not use, authorize the use of, or acquiesce in the use of public facilities to assist a campaign for elected office, or to support or oppose a ballot proposition. Facilities include, but are not limited to, stationery, postage, machines, equipment, employees, vehicles, office space, publications of the office or agency, and clientele lists. Exceptions to the prohibition include:

- action taken at an open public meeting by members of an elected legislative body to express a collective decision, to actually vote on a motion, proposal, resolution, order or ordinance, or to support or oppose a ballot proposition. Notice of the meeting must include the title and number of the ballot proposition, and members of the public and the legislative body must be allowed an opportunity to express opposing views;
- a statement by an elected official supporting or opposing a ballot proposition made at an open press conference or made in response to an inquiry; and
- activities that are part of the normal and regular conduct of the office or agency.

State legislators and statewide elected officials are afforded an additional exception of de minimis use of public facilities incidental to the preparation or delivery of permissible, self-initiated communications of their views on ballot propositions that foreseeably may affect a matter that falls within their responsibilities.

**Summary of Bill:**

State and local elected officials may use public facilities to prepare and deliver self-initiated communications consisting of information on the impact that ballot propositions foreseeably may have on matters that fall within their responsibilities. This exception is not limited to de minimis use of public facilities, but is limited to communications of information, rather than views, on ballot propositions.

**Rulemaking Authority:** No express authority.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not Requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.