

Legislative Analysis



**REVISE TERMS OF OFFICE:
SIX YEARS IN STATE SENATE; FOUR IN STATE HOUSE**

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**House Joint Resolution XX
Sponsor: Rep. Mark Meadows
Committee: Judiciary**

Complete to 4-13-10

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION XX AS INTRODUCED 3-2-10

House Joint Resolution XX would amend the State Constitution so that members of the State House of Representatives would serve four-year terms rather than two-year terms and members of the State Senate would serve six-year terms rather than four-year terms.

Under the proposal, elections for the House and Senate would be held every two years, meaning that one-half of the House would stand for election every two years and roughly one-third of the Senate would stand for election every two years.

The joint resolution would amend Sections 2 and 3 of Article IV of the State Constitution and would require voter approval; it would be submitted to voters at the next general election. (Note: Joint Resolution XX refers to the letters, not Roman numerals.)

Impact on Senate Elections

Currently, the 38 members of the Senate are elected at the same election as the governor and serve for four-year terms concurrent with the term of office of the governor. Under the bill, this would apply only through 2010. In the 2010, the Senate districts would be divided, by lot, into groups with staggered terms: 13 two-year terms; 12 four-year terms; and 13 six-year terms. However, any Senate district in which an incumbent is seeking re-election would be one of the 12 four-year terms. After the 2010 election, Senators would be elected biennially for six-year terms.

Impact on House Elections

The House of Representatives currently consists of 110 members elected for two-year terms from single member districts. This would apply through 2010. At the general election in 2010, the House districts would be divided, by lot, into groups of two- and four-year terms. However, under the bill as introduced, any member who was seeking reelection after serving four years would be counted in the group elected for four years and any member seeking reelection who had served two years would be counted in the group elected for two years. After the 2010 election, their successors would be elected biennially for terms of four years.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Joint Resolution XX would have a positive fiscal impact on state and local government. The provisions of the bill would allow for staggered terms in the Senate and House of Representatives. Local governments would see savings over current practice because they would only have Senatorial elections every six years and Representative elections every four years. The Secretary of State would likely experience decreased administrative costs associated with less staff time checking candidate filings.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.