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## **FISCAL IMPACT REPORT**



SPONSOR: Hurt DATE TYPED: 02/11/02 HB \_\_\_\_\_

SHORT TITLE: Limit Length of Legislative Reports SB 247

ANALYST: Wilson

### **APPROPRIATION**

<b>Appropriation Contained</b>		<b>Estimated Additional Impact</b>		<b>Recurring or Non-Rec</b>	<b>Fund Affected</b>
<b>FY02</b>	<b>FY03</b>	<b>FY02</b>	<b>FY03</b>		
	See Narrative				

### **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)  
State Personnel Office (SPO)  
Commission on Public Records (CPR)

### **SUMMARY**

#### **Synopsis of Bill**

Senate Bill 247 amends current law by limiting the number of pages of any material submitted or sent by a state agency to the members of the legislature from five pages to three pages. This excludes proposed legislation. This bill also deletes requirements by state agencies to file duplicate copies of reports with the legislative council service. Other procedural requirements for binding, submission and compiling of reports are also deleted from the statute.

#### **Significant Issues**

SB 247 may make it more difficult for state agencies to provide requested information to the legislature in a way that does not jeopardize the quality and integrity of the content.

The legislature might have to make critical decisions on complex issues based on summarized information.

SB 247 will result in more concise reports, but the agencies may issue them more frequently.

## **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

It is anticipated that SB 247 will result in a substantial savings in the category of office supplies.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

The administrative cost of producing and processing lengthy reports will be eliminated

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

The CPR has provided the following:

While SB 247 will generate some cost savings by reducing production-related costs associated with printed annual and other reports and responses to legislative requests, it would significantly limit the information available to legislators. By striking the exceptions for annual and other reports, direct requests, and the executive budget as well as the exclusion from the provisions of the current section for political subdivisions, educational institutions, and legislative entities, SB 247 appears to effectively restrict the information about the operations and issues of state government available to the legislature to that which can be distilled to three pages or less. Undoubtedly, some information supplied today is excessive – some is likely left unread – but not all issues can be adequately addressed within three pages. Presumably, agencies with statutory mandates to produce annual and other reports would yet be required to do so – but those reports, unless otherwise specified in law, would be restricted to three pages. SB 247 might mitigate the current problem of too much paper by sacrificing the integrity of historical records. Since reports of this nature have the potential of being retained permanently in the State Archives, it should be recognized that they are historical documents. If the limitation of report length forces agencies to forgo including all the pertinent facts and issues, the historical record could be weakened by the absence of information.

## **POSSIBLE QUESTIONS**

Is the language in SB 247 applicable to reports filed electronically? Could the reports and other information still be provided in a longer electronic format, especially since pagination is not automatic with all file types?

DW/ar