

BACKGROUND PAPER 97-9

**IMPLEMENTING A LIMITED
LEGISLATIVE SESSION:
METHODS TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS**

**(Previous Nevada Studies and
Analysis of Six Other States)**

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PREFACE

After Nevada's first regular session, which was held in late 1864 and early 1865 (90 days in length), the *Nevada Constitution* limited regular sessions to no more than 60 calendar days and specified that they be held only in odd-numbered years. From 1866 through 1907, the Legislature was able to stay within this limitation. However, **every regular session between 1909 and 1957 extended beyond the 60th calendar day**. The practice was to "cover the clock" on the 60th day and continue business until adjourning *sine die*. All actions taken after the 60th day were shown to have occurred on the 60th day. The longest legislative sessions during this period were in 1933 and 1949, which actually ran 71 and 70 days, respectively.

Because of the inability of the Legislature to conduct its business within 60 calendar days, three proposed constitutional amendments were sent to the voters in 1958. These proposals, which were all approved, established **annual sessions of unlimited length** and limited legislative salaries to only **the first 60 days**. However, the 1959 Session ran for 67 days, while the 1960 Session lasted 55 days. Because of this apparent lack of legislative restraint, an initiative proposal to amend the *Nevada Constitution* was submitted to the voters in November 1960. That proposal was approved and resulted in the current structure of **biennial sessions of unlimited length**, but retained the 60-day limit on legislative salaries.

Nevada has conducted biennial legislative sessions of **unlimited length** since 1961. The last five legislative sessions (1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, and 1997) all exceeded 160 calendar days in length. The 1997 Session tied or broke all the records by lasting 169 calendar days and adjourning on July 7. The last regular session in Nevada that was less than 120 days was conducted in 1977; a session that lasted 113 calendar days.

The lengthening of legislative sessions poses special problems in a "citizen legislature." Therefore, the 1995 and 1997 Sessions approved a proposed amendment to the *Nevada Constitution* (Senate Joint Resolution No. 3 of the 68th Session) that would limit future sessions to 120 calendar days, starting in 1999. This constitutional amendment is worded in a manner that precludes "covering the clock." At the November 1998 General Election, Nevada's voters will either approve or reject this proposal. If it is approved, the next session would begin on February 1, 1999, and end no later than May 31, 1999.

Several members of the Legislature contacted the Research Division just before or after the 1997 *sine die* concerning the need to research procedures that could be used to speed up future legislative sessions. As a starting point, it was suggested that a compilation of previous Nevada study proposals be reexamined. Further, staff recommended an analysis of procedures used in some states that conduct legislative sessions of limited length. This background paper is the result of that research and analysis.

The staff of the Research Division is available to provide additional details concerning the matters outlined in this report, to conduct further research, or to assist any legislator or committee interested in this most important topic.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS IN NEVADA

The first section of this background paper focuses on three previous studies of the overall legislative process in Nevada that resulted in recommendations for improving the organization and operation of the Legislature. Several, but not all, of the recommendations in these reports pertain to increasing work flow efficiency and speeding up the session. Six other previous legislative studies on related topics are also identified for future reference.

The reports from the three targeted studies are:

- “Prospect for Greatness — Recommendations for the Organization and Operation of the Nevada Legislature and the Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau”;¹
- “Blue Ribbon Commission on Legislative Process”;² and
- “Structure and Functioning of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB).”³

Only selected recommendations that relate to a limited legislative session, and which have not already been adopted, are presented below. Most of the text is taken verbatim from the reports and is shown in *italics*, but some text has been omitted for the sake of brevity.

A. “Prospect for Greatness” (1974)

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 23 (File No. 123, *Statutes of Nevada 1973*) directed the Legislative Commission to study the organization, procedures, and operation of the Legislature and the Legislative Counsel Bureau. The commission appointed the Subcommittee on Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedure to conduct the study. As part of its investigation, the subcommittee contracted with the Citizens Conference on State Legislatures to conduct an

¹The Citizens Conference on State Legislatures, “Prospect for Greatness — Recommendations for the Organization and Operation of the Nevada Legislature and the Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau,” a report to the Subcommittee on Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedure, the Legislative Commission, and Members of the Nevada Legislature, January 1974.

²Legislative Commission, “Blue Ribbon Commission on Legislative Process,” Legislative Counsel Bureau *Bulletin No. 89-7*, September 1988.

³Legislative Commission, “Structure and Functioning of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB),” Legislative Counsel Bureau *Bulletin No. 95-15*, December 1994.

independent analysis of the Legislature. The Citizens Conference issued a report entitled "Prospect for Greatness," and the subcommittee adopted most of the report's recommendations and included them in its own report to the 1975 Legislature.⁴

The 1974 report by the Citizens Conference contains the following recommendations that may assist in implementing a limited session:

Interim Committees

Background:

If the interim is to serve as the formative stage in development of legislation, the role of interim committees must be expanded.

At present, standing committees of the Nevada Legislature cease to function after sine die adjournment of the session. During the interim, committee work is carried out by special subcommittees appointed by the Legislative Commission. The areas studied by the subcommittees are determined either by a resolution of both houses or are designated by the Legislative Commission. There is no formalized rule relating to the composition of subcommittees and, little, if any, carry-over of expertise from session standing committees to interim subcommittees. This arrangement poses two disadvantages. Members of interim subcommittees are not assured of carrying recommendations to their logical conclusion. More than likely, they will not serve on the standing committee which will finalize the legislation. Continuity is broken. Expertise gained by interim subcommittee members is lost to the standing committee which finalizes the legislation. Therefore, we recommend:

Recommendation: *During the interim, standing committees of the Senate and the Assembly should join to form joint interim committees for the purpose of conducting policy studies.*

Interim committees should be initiators of legislation. They can most effectively gather independent information, conduct deliberative hearings, and formulate sound legislative proposals. The primary advantage of carry over in committee membership from session to interim is continuity in development of legislative proposals. Membership carry over also provides more informed consideration of legislation during the session.

To reinforce the continuity achieved by joint interim standing committees, the Legislature should try, as far as possible, to maintain the same committee membership from session to session. Although there will be attrition, substantial carry over in committee membership can be achieved and builds interested and expert committee members.⁵

⁴Legislative Commission, "Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedures," Legislative Counsel Bureau *Bulletin No. 114*, 1974.

⁵The Citizens Conference on State Legislatures, pp. 8-10.

Recommendation: *Final reports, committee records, and related legislative proposals should be submitted to the Legislature prior to convening of the session. Drafted bills should be prefiled when the final report is rendered.*

*To avoid submission of all reports on the same day, leaders should establish different deadlines for each committee's final report. All resulting bills should be prefiled at the time the report is rendered.*⁶

Pre-session Organization

Background:

The Nevada Legislature is not authorized to hold a pre-session organization session, and valuable time is often lost during the first few weeks of the regular session while the Legislature organizes. Therefore, we recommend:

Recommendation: *The Nevada Constitution be amended to provide for a pre-session organization session following the general election. During this session, leadership should be elected, committee chairmen appointed, members assigned to committees, prefiled bills referred to committees, and organizational committee meetings held.*

*This will eliminate much of the confusion which now arises as newly elected leaders organize their respective houses. When the session convenes, elected leaders will be better equipped to give immediate direction to the legislative process. And, the statutes should prescribe that pre-session election be open to full public view. Open government helps maintain public trust in the legislative process.*⁷

Standing Committees

Background:

Part of the problem is structural jurisdictions of committees are not specified and committee workloads are skewed. Committees of the two houses are not parallel and schedules are not coordinated, thus, committee meeting schedules conflict and committee efforts are duplicated. Members have too many committee assignments. Rules and procedures governing committee activities are either nonexistent or not enforced, thus, committees operate at the whim of individual chairmen.

⁶Ibid., p. 11.

⁷Ibid., p. 13.

As a first step in adjusting the structure of the Legislature to allow for meaningful and productive committee work, it is recommended:

Recommendation: *The standing committees of the Senate and the Assembly be parallel in number and jurisdictions.*

Parallel committees would reduce the overall complexity of the legislative process and facilitate the flow of legislation from one house to the other.

To implement this recommendation we suggest the following. First, there should be seven committees in each house with parallel jurisdiction. While no magic formula exists for the correct number of standing committees, the overall size of the Nevada Legislature suggests this number should be workable.⁸

A reduced number of standing committees provides a more equitable distribution of committee workload. Ideally committee assignments should not exceed two per member. This would allow the legislator to devote adequate time to his committee responsibilities and ease the problem of conflicting schedules.

Recommendation: *Members of the Nevada Legislature be limited to serving on two standing committees. Leadership should serve only on the Legislative Functions Committee.⁹*

Fiscal Notes

Background:

Legislators must be advised of projected costs and impact of all bills presented for consideration. We recommend:

Recommendation: *Upon introduction, all bills having financial impact should carry a complete fiscal note projecting financial impact.*

When a bill undergoes substantial change in committee, the original fiscal note should be amended to reflect such change.¹⁰

⁸Ibid., p. 17.

⁹Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 22.

Regulation of Work Flow

Like most legislatures, the Nevada Legislature experiences an end-of-session logjam. Committees are forced to meet late into the night. Floor action is hurried and haphazard. Bills are passed without adequate consideration or information. Deliberate formulation of public policy is set aside in the race to adjourn.

In the Nevada Legislature, logjams result from a series of factors: limitations on time, lack of procedures for speeding the consideration of minor measures, disparities in committee workloads, shortage of staff, delay by the Executive Branch in submitting proposals and supplying necessary information and the quantity and complexity of legislative business.

Deadlines

Background:

One step which will alleviate this logjam is adoption of a series of deadlines to govern movement of a bill through the legislative process. Staff cannot be expected to work within deadline schedules if legislators function outside these deadlines. It is recommended:

Recommendation: *The Nevada Legislature adopt joint rules instituting a well-defined schedule of deadlines governing introduction of bills, reporting of bills from standing and conference committees, and reporting of bills from one house to the other.*

Deadlines maximize available time. But little will be accomplished if they are not instituted and strictly adhered to in both the Assembly and Senate.

To ensure that sufficient time exists to consider all bills during the session, a deadline should be established which prohibits bill introductions after one-fourth of the session has expired. The cutoff for bill drafting requests for bills to be introduced in the session should precede this deadline by not less than seven days. This schedule of deadlines will enable the Legislature to begin immediate action on much of the legislation as the session convenes.

Bill drafting services should be available to the legislator at any time. However, it will be to the advantage of the legislator to submit his bill drafting requests to the LCB as soon as possible. This will ensure that the bill drafter has adequate time to perform his job. Presession organization and orientation sessions will aid in the early submission of requests.

The 57th Session passed a law permitting presession filing of drafted legislation and limited the number of bill-drafting requests each legislator could make. Both actions increase session efficiency.

It has been recommended that committees report on all bills. In conjunction with this recommendation, deadlines should be adopted requiring committees to report to their respective

houses by the time two-thirds of the session is expended. This will prevent a committee from effectively killing a bill by reporting it late in the session.

Uniform deadlines also allow sufficient time for one house to consider a bill originating in the other. At the latest, all approved bills originating in the Assembly should be sent to the Senate by the time three-fourths of the session is expended. The same deadline should apply to bills originating in the Senate. This will reduce the number of bills passing the house of origin only to die in committee or on general file in the other house.

Deadlines encourage self-discipline. Through their use the flow of legislative work can be regulated and legislators can function in a deliberate and responsible manner.¹¹

B. "Blue Ribbon Commission on Legislative Process" (1988)

The 1987 Legislature enacted Assembly Bill 678 (Chapter 811, *Statutes of Nevada 1987*) which created the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Legislative Process. As presented in the Blue Ribbon Commission's 1988 report, the following recommendations, if adopted, might contribute to speeding up session:

Modified Budget Process for Nevada

Background:

The blue ribbon commission believes that the budget review process could be expedited, and sessions consequently could be shortened significantly, by involving all legislators in the appropriations process.

The blue ribbon commission, therefore, recommends:

Recommendation: *That the Nevada Legislature modify the budget review procedure by involving additional legislators and expediting the process by:*

- a. Requiring the governor to present the executive budget to the legislative counsel bureau 30 days before the convening of the session;*
- b. Establishing an executive appropriation committee to oversee and reconcile the budget;*
- c. Establishing the six joint appropriations subcommittees consisting of nine members each (three senators and six assemblymen) to review the budgets and make appropriation recommendations in the following areas:*

¹¹Ibid., pp. 23-24.

1. *Commerce, labor and transportation;*
2. *Government affairs;*
3. *Human resources;*
4. *Judiciary;*
5. *Natural resources; and*
6. *Public and higher education.*¹²

Parallel Committees and Joint Committee Hearings

Background:

One method used to facilitate the use of joint hearings would be the establishment of parallel committees between each house of the legislature. Over the years, definite inroads have been made in Nevada in that direction. In 1955, the senate had 20 standing committees, and the assembly had 27. There were 17 senators and 47 assemblymen. The committees were smaller, meeting times were irregular, and members were often scheduled for two or more meetings at the same time. By 1987, the number of standing committees had been reduced to nine in the senate and 13 in the assembly.

Parallel committees would reduce the overall complexity of the legislative process and facilitate the flow of legislation from one house to the other. Parallel committees would also facilitate the coordination of activities and workload between houses and make easier the combining of standing committees for joint hearings.

Certain states, such as Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming have parallel committees in each house of the legislature. Other states, such as Connecticut, use joint committees exclusively. Maine, Massachusetts and Rhode Island have certain parallel committees and other joint committees. Utah and Wyoming have joint appropriations committees. Colorado has a joint budget committee.

The proposed schedule in Table I (see page 8) illustrates an example for structuring seven parallel committees in the Nevada legislature, which would facilitate hearings. Also shown in the table are the six appropriations subcommittees discussed earlier in this report.

¹²Legislative Commission (1988), pp. 12-15.

**TABLE I
PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS TO PROVIDE FOR OPTIMUM
USE OF JOINT HEARINGS AND COORDINATION BETWEEN
THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY**

Senate Standing Committees	Proposed Meeting Times	Assembly Standing Committees
Finance Six Appropriations Subcommittees	APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEES Meeting Jointly (8 a.m. - Monday through Friday) General Sessions 10:30 a.m. through 12 noon	Ways and Means Six Appropriations Subcommittees
PARALLEL STANDING COMMITTEES (May meet jointly by arrangement of chairmen)		
Judiciary	1:30 p.m. (M, W, F)	Judiciary
Government Affairs; Legislative Affairs and Operations	1:30 p.m. (M, W, F)	Government Affairs; Elections, Economic Development and Tourism; Legislative Functions
Human Resources and Facilities	1:30 p.m. (M, W, F)	Health and Welfare; Education
Natural Resources	1:30 p.m. (M, W, F)	Natural Resources, Agriculture and Mining
Commerce and Labor	1:30 p.m. (Tu & Th)	Commerce and Labor
Transportation	1:30 p.m. (Tu & Th)	Transportation
Taxation	1:30 p.m. (Tu & Th)	Taxation

The blue ribbon commission believes that parallel standing committees and meeting times would help simplify the legislative process and increase opportunities for joint committee hearings, as necessary. This reform also would contribute toward reducing the length of sessions.

Although the number of standing committees would be reduced to eight in each house, the leadership also would be empowered to appoint the six cochairmen of the appropriations subcommittees.

The blue ribbon commission, therefore, recommends:

Recommendation: *That the Nevada legislature establish parallel standing committees and meeting times in the senate and assembly.*

*The blue ribbon commission emphasizes that it is not taking a position and makes no recommendation concerning the number of members to be appointed to these parallel standing committees.*¹³

Bill Drafting and Introductions

Background:

*The blue ribbon commission reviewed a number of recommendations relating to the processing of legislation during the legislative sessions. These recommendations dealt with mechanisms to speed the legislative process through the early introduction of bills requested by the agencies of the executive branch of government and local governments * * *.*

Early Review of Executive Bills

Background:

** * * several hundred executive branch and local government bills are available for introduction early in each session and could be considered by the legislature. There is usually a delay, however, while legislative sponsors are being found. Sponsors also tend to delay, for various political or practical reasons, the introduction of the measures. If bills of the executive branch and local governments were to be introduced earlier in the session, the early, less busy part of session could be put to more efficient use, which would promote a corresponding reduction in the length of the session.*

The blue ribbon commission, therefore, recommends:

Recommendation: *That the Nevada legislature require agency and local government bills that are drafted to be delivered to leadership and introduced during the first week of the legislative session.*¹⁴

Deadlines

Background:

Many states establish deadlines for action on bills to encourage the early processing of bills by legislative committees and to prevent chairmen from not processing bills to negotiate the passage

¹³Ibid., pp. 15-18.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 27-28.

*of other measures. Deadlines range from those that affect one aspect of the process * * * to Michigan's complete set of deadlines for almost all aspects of the legislative process. The points to which deadlines may be applied include:*

- *Bill requests;*
- *Bill introductions;*
- *Report of bills by committee in house of origin;*
- *Passage of bills in house of origin;*
- *Report of bills by committee in other house; and*
- *Passage of bills originating in other house.*

The blue ribbon commission believes that a modified system of deadlines for action on bills in the Nevada legislature should be installed to expedite the processing of legislation during a session. The commission believes that a deadline on the passage of bills from the house of origin and a requirement for action in the other house on bills passed by one house would encourage the early processing of bills, help to limit the length of legislative sessions, and discourage chairmen from holding bills pending action on other unrelated measures.

The blue ribbon commission, therefore, recommends:

Recommendation: *That the Nevada legislature establish a system of deadlines for action on bills to include:*

- a. A requirement that bills cannot be passed from the house of origin later than 60 days after introduction; and*
- b. A requirement that all bills passed from the house of origin must be heard and voted on by committee in the other house.¹⁵*

C. "Structure and Functioning of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB)" (1994)

Pursuant to Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 67 (File No. 176, *Statutes of Nevada 1993*), the Legislative Commission conducted, during the 1993-1994 interim, a study of the structure and functioning of the LCB. The 1994 report from the study includes the following recommendations that may assist in speeding up the legislative process:

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 29-30.

Deadline for Introducing Bills After Delivery

Background:

A practice that can delay the work of the Legislature occurs when bills are held after delivery to a legislator. If a bill has been drafted and delivered to a legislator, it should be introduced so that it can be acted upon as soon as possible. One of the reasons for the glut of bills at the end of session is the number of bills that are withheld from introduction until late in the session. If a legislator holds a bill for a longer period than necessary, approval of the standing committee which will consider the measure should be obtained before the measure can be introduced.

Recommendation:

The Legislative Commission recommends:

Require that a legislator (including the chairman of a committee that requests a bill draft) introduce a bill or joint resolution within 10 legislative days after delivery of the final version of the BDR to the legislator. If a measure is not introduced within this period, it cannot be introduced without the approval of the standing committee which has jurisdiction over the subject of the measure.¹⁶

Floor Time for Memorials and Commendations

Background:

Resolutions that are in the nature of memorials or commendations can occupy a substantial amount of time on the floor of each house. Though these measures are important, they should not hinder the work of the Legislature. One way to allow these measures to be heard without disrupting the business of the Legislature would be to require that they be heard at the end of the week, after the Legislature had conducted its business for the week.

Recommendation:

The Legislative Commission recommends as follows:

Require that resolutions which constitute memorials or commendations be considered as the last item of business on Friday of each week.¹⁷

¹⁶Legislative Commission, December 1994, p. 13.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 14.

D. Other Previous Studies

Six other reports include recommendations from previous studies that examined one or more elements of Nevada's legislative process. Each of these studies is briefly discussed below.

1. The 1967 Legislature adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 11 (File No. 103, *Statutes of Nevada 1967*). This measure directed the Legislative Commission to study the possible means of revising and updating legislative techniques, including possible ways to streamline Nevada's legislative process. The 1969 report from this study is "Legislative Techniques."¹⁸
2. Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 25 of the 1971 Session (File No. 97, *Statutes of Nevada 1971*) directed the Legislative Commission to study the Legislature's standing rules and to recommend changes to increase the efficiency of the legislative process. The commission appointed a subcommittee which issued a 1972 report entitled "Legislative Rules Study."¹⁹
3. The 1985 Legislature adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 40 (File No. 112, *Statutes of Nevada 1985*) which directed the Legislative Commission to evaluate the procedures set forth in the resolution to continue the standing committees of the Legislature through the interim to conduct studies. The product of this evaluation was a report to the 1987 Legislature.²⁰
4. The first of a series of three studies of the state budget process in Nevada was initiated with the adoption of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 44 of the 1989 Session (File No. 194, *Statutes of Nevada 1989*). The committee created by this measure made recommendations to limit the length of the session, proposed a new budget cycle with key dates for budget actions, and recommended a modified committee organization and structure for the budget committees. The committee's report was completed in September of 1990.²¹

¹⁸Legislative Commission, "Legislative Techniques," Legislative Counsel Bureau *Bulletin No. 75*, January 1969. (Revised version is *Bulletin No. 75A*, September 5, 1972.)

¹⁹Legislative Commission, "Legislative Rules Study," Legislative Counsel Bureau *Bulletin No. 112*, December 1972.

²⁰Legislative Commission, "Study of the Procedures to Continue the Standing Committees of the Legislature through the Interim to Conduct Studies," Legislative Counsel Bureau *Bulletin No. 87-36*, February 1987.

²¹Legislative Commission, "Study of State Budget Process," Legislative Counsel Bureau *Bulletin No. 91-13*, September 1990.

5. To follow up on the S.C.R. 44 study of the 1989-1990 interim, the 1991 Legislature adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 21 (File No. 186, *Statutes of Nevada 1991*) which also created a committee to study the state budget process. This study report was issued in 1992.²²
6. The 1993 Legislature created the third and most recent study of the state budget process with the adoption of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 46 (File No. 165, *Statutes of Nevada 1993*). The committee appointed to conduct this study issued its report in 1994.²³ The recommendations in the report include, among other things, proposals for improving the current budget process (including adhering to strict timetables) and utilizing joint subcommittees to develop budget recommendations.

II. RULES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES USED IN OTHER STATES

A. Overview of States Selected for Analysis

Only seven of the 50 states conduct legislative sessions on a biennial basis. Of those seven, only **Nevada** and **Oregon** currently do not have limits on the length of session. The five remaining states (Arkansas, Kentucky, Montana, North Dakota, and Texas) were evaluated for further study in relation to possible future sessions of 120 calendar days in Nevada. Of those five states, only **Montana** and **Texas** were selected for review and analysis.

The **Kentucky General Assembly** meets biennially in **even-numbered years**. The first year after elections serves as the legislative interim period, while the regular session is held in the second year of the biennium and immediately precedes the next campaign and election cycle. The differences resulting from such a structure were considered too great for comparative purposes with Nevada.

Like Nevada, the **Arkansas General Assembly** and the **North Dakota Legislative Assembly** meet biennially in odd-numbered years. Arkansas was not selected for review because its sessions theoretically are limited to 60 calendar days, special sessions are common, and the Legislature is allowed to extend the length of session on a two-thirds vote in each house. For example, the 1995 Session ran for 89 calendar days, while the 1997 Session lasted 96 days. North Dakota was not selected for a number of reasons, including its small population (just over 600,000) and lack of growth-related issues.

Although **Texas** is the second largest state in the nation in both population and geographical area, it operates a biennial session limited to 140 calendar days and has not required any special sessions

²²Legislative Commission, "Study of the State Budget Process," Legislative Counsel Bureau *Bulletin No. 93-17*, September 1992.

²³Legislative Commission, "Study of Establishing a Legislative Budget Office," Legislative Counsel Bureau *Bulletin No. 95-17*, September 1994.

in recent years. **Montana** conducts biennial sessions that are limited to 90 legislative days. Therefore, the actual session length is normally between 100 and 120 calendar days. Like Nevada, Montana is large geographically, is located in the West, and most of its legislators live significant distances from the State Capitol. For these and other reasons, both Texas and Montana were selected for further study.

Of the states that conduct **limited annual sessions**, four were selected for review and analysis. They are **Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, and Kansas**. The staff of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) suggested that Nevada examine Alaska and Colorado because of geographical factors, the efficiency of Colorado's legislative process, and NCSL's efforts to assist Alaska along these lines. Arizona borders on Nevada and shares much in common with our state, including very rapid growth. Arizona's use of a number of procedures to improve its legislative process also contributed to its selection for study. Finally, it was decided that it would be beneficial to review another state legislature that is not located in the West. Kansas was selected because of its ability to conduct limited sessions, without extending their length or conducting frequent special sessions, a population between 2 million and 3 million, a bill load similar to Nevada's, and a central nonpartisan staff similar to the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

The staff of the Research Division of the LCB is available to analyze the legislative process of any other state upon request.

B. Alaska

Population: Currently estimated at approximately **610,000**.

State Capitol: Juneau. Only about 30,000 people live in the Juneau area. There are no highways linking Juneau with the rest of the state. Airline service, an all-season harbor, and telecommunications help Alaskans stay in contact with events in the State Capitol.

Alaska Legislature: Total of **60 members** (20 Senators and 40 Representatives). Alaska has the second smallest number of state legislators in the nation (Nevada ranks fourth smallest).

Sessions: Annual, limited to 120 days, unless extended for up to 10 additional days upon a two-third vote in both houses. **Special sessions** are not uncommon in even-numbered years (two in 1994 for a total of 10 days; one in 1996 for a total of 30 days). Sessions convene on the **second Monday in January** (third Monday following election of Governor). The 1996 Session ran for 122 calendar days, and the 1997 Session lasted 119 days.

Committees: In 1997, the Alaska Legislature had nine standing committees in both the Senate and House.

Bills: In 1996, 342 bills were introduced and 146 were enacted (43 percent). In 1997, 495 bills were introduced, but only 113 were enacted (23 percent). Bills may be "carried over" from an

odd-numbered session to the following even-numbered session. There were 60 **prefiled legislative measures** in 1996, and 108 in 1997.

Bill Drafting: All legislative measures are drafted by the Office of Legal Services. Unless specifically authorized by a legislator, non-legislative entities **may not** request the drafting of legislative measures or amendments thereto. There are no limits on the numbers of bills that may be requested by a legislator or legislative committee.

Deadlines: The following deadline applies during session:

- ◆ **During the second session of a biennium, individual legislators must introduce all of their bills by the 35th day of session. There are no deadlines on committees or on other aspects of the process, excluding the budget.**

Work Week: The Alaska Legislature generally works from Monday through Saturday — **6 days per week**. During the final weeks of session, the Legislature meets all **7 days**.

C. Arizona

Population: Currently estimated at approximately **4.3 million**.

State Capitol: Phoenix. Well over half of the population of Arizona lives in the Greater Phoenix Metropolitan Area.

Arizona Legislature: Total of **90 members** (30 Senators and 60 Representatives).

Sessions: **Annual, limited by rule to approximately 100 calendar days.** Regular sessions convene on the **second Monday in January**. An average of two or three special sessions each year, usually three days or less in duration to correct budget matters. The 1996 Regular Session ran for 99 calendar days, while the 1997 Session lasted 104 calendar days.

Committees: In 1997, the Arizona Legislature had 13 Senate committees and 19 House committees. Both the Senate and House have an Appropriations Committee, each of which is comprised of three subcommittees. Somewhere between 60 and 70 joint legislative study committees are formed each interim.

Bills: In 1996, 994 bills were introduced, of which 368 were ultimately passed. In 1997, 1,045 bills were introduced and 301 gained final approval. There are no "carry over" bills from session to session. Further, there were 186 **prefiled bills** in 1997 and 211 in 1996.

Bill Drafting: All legislative measures are drafted by the Office of Legislative Counsel. Generally, only members of the Legislature and their staff may communicate with the counsel concerning the drafting of bills and amendments. Further, there are no limits on the numbers

of legislative measures that may be requested by members of the Legislature before the start of session.

Deadlines: With a few exceptions, the following deadlines applied during the 1997 Session:

- ◆ **Senate bill draft request deadline on the 8th day of session, and House deadline on the 15th day of session.** Approximately 100 bills requested in 1997 were rather general “vehicle bills.” Such bills are used for complicated topics requiring details to be worked out later in session, and for “technical corrections.” The latter typically are used late in session by legislative leaders for important matters that develop during session (“strike everything” concept).
- ◆ **Deadlines for bill introductions are the 15th day for the Senate and the 22nd day for the House.** (Only one Senate bill and one House bill were introduced after this deadline in 1997).
- ◆ **All Senate bills must be heard in a Senate committee, and all House bills heard in House committee, by the 40th day of session.**
- ◆ **All Senate bills must be heard in a House committee, and all House bills heard in a Senate committee, by the 75th day of session.**
- ◆ Budget week begins on the 50th day of session.
- ◆ Final deliberations in the houses on the budget begin on the 57th day of session, with the **final budget submitted to the Governor by the 65th day.**
- ◆ *Sine die* target date is set four days before the 100th day of session.

Work Week: With a few exceptions just before deadlines, the average work week for the Arizona Legislature is from Monday morning through Thursday afternoon, with some committee meetings on Friday — **4 to 4 ½ days per week.**

D. Colorado

Population: Currently estimated at approximately **3.8 million.**

State Capitol: **Denver.** Over half of the residents of Colorado live in the Greater Denver Metropolitan area, and more than three-fourths of the state’s population live within 100 miles of the State Capitol.

Colorado General Assembly (Legislature): Total of **100 members** (35 Senators and 65 Representatives).

Sessions: Annual, limited by the constitution to **120 calendar days**. No special sessions since 1993. Regular sessions convene on the **second** Wednesday of January. The 1996 and 1997 Sessions both lasted the full 120 calendar days.

Committees: There are **ten Senate standing committees**. The **ten House committees** cover the same topics as their counterpart committees in the Senate. Within this total, each house has an Appropriations Committee. Additionally, there is a six-member **Joint Budget Committee** made up of three Senators and three Representatives. However, unlike the 20 standing committees, this is not a "committee of referral."

Bills: In 1996, 615 bills were introduced and 321 gained final approval. In 1997, 598 bills were introduced and 307 were approved. Approximately 100 bills are **prefiled** before each legislative session — one per member.

Bill Drafting: All legislative measures are drafted by the Office of Legislative Legal Services (very similar to the Legal Division of the LCB). Only legislators may request the drafting of bills and resolutions.

Limits on Bill Draft Requests: Only five BDRs per legislator. Three of the five bills must be requested prior to December 1 immediately preceding session (December 15 for newly elected members).

Deadlines: The following deadlines applied during the 1997 Session:

- ◆ **Introduction of the 100 prefiled bills on first day of session.**
- ◆ **Introduction of each legislator's remaining two bills that were requested prior to the December deadlines — third day of session for Senators and sixth day for Representatives.**
- ◆ **The two remaining bill drafts for each member must be requested by the sixth day of session.**
- ◆ **Introduction of all remaining legislative measures requested by individual members — 17th day for Senators and 23rd day for Representatives.**
- ◆ **Excluding appropriations and emergency measures, Senate committees of reference must act on all Senate bills by the 37th day, and House committees on House bills by the 38th day. Final action by house of origin on 48th day in House and 50th day in Senate.**
- ◆ **Excluding appropriations and emergency measures, standing committees in the second legislative house must act on all legislative measures by the 73rd day of session.**
- ◆ **Excluding appropriations and emergency measures, final passage of all bills and resolutions in the second house by the 90th day of session.**

- ◆ **Appropriations measures must be acted on by house of origin no later than the 101st day, and by the 113th day in the second house.**

Work Week: With a few exceptions just before key deadlines, the average work week for the Colorado General Assembly is from Monday morning through Friday noon — **4 ½ days.**

Budget: The **Joint Budget Committee** has a full-time staff of about 15, and the state budget is developed by that committee instead of the Governor's office. The review process by the Joint Budget Committee starts in November each year. The Governor's budget proposals are included in a report submitted to the Legislature each January, but are not translated into a budget document. The general appropriations bill (state budget) is referred to as the **Long Bill**. Its introduction alternates between the two houses from session to session. In 1997, the deadline for introducing the Long Bill in the Senate was on the 76th day of session. Its final passage was required in the Senate by the 80th day, and in the House on the 87th day.

E. Kansas

Population: Currently estimated at approximately **2.6 million.**

State Capitol: Topeka. At least three-fourths of the population of Kansas lives within 150 miles of the State Capitol.

Kansas Legislature: Total of **165 members** (40 Senators and 125 Representatives).

Sessions: **Annual, limited to 90 calendar days**, excluding a two-week adjournment near the end of session. **No special sessions** since 1989. Sessions convene on the **second Monday in January**. The 1996 Session ran for 69 legislative days, while the 1997 Session lasted 68 legislative days.

Committees: In 1997, the Kansas Legislature had 16 Senate committees, 20 House committees, and 12 joint committees. The joint committees are most active during interim periods. Special study committees also are formed during each interim.

Bills: In 1996, 876 bills were introduced and an additional 422 bills were "carried over" from the 1995 Session. Of this total, 272 were enacted into law (21 percent). In 1997, 970 bills were introduced, 192 of which were enacted (20 percent). There were only 40 **prefiled bills** in 1996 and 32 in 1997.

Bill Drafting: All legislative measures are drafted by the Office of Revisor of Statutes (very similar to the Legal Division of LCB). Generally, only a member or committee of the Legislature may request the drafting of a bill or resolution. Amendments to bills are drafted at the request of individual members and committee chairmen. The latter may direct interested parties to work with revisor's staff assigned to the committee for the drafting of amendments for committee consideration.

Deadlines: With a few exceptions, the following deadlines apply during session:

- ◆ **Bill draft requests from individual members by the 15th calendar day;**
- ◆ **Bill draft requests from committees (excluding tax, appropriations and federal and state affairs) by the 22nd day;**
- ◆ **Introduction of drafted measures delivered to members and committees by the 33rd day** (In 1996, only 12 percent of all legislative measures were introduced after the 33rd day deadline. In 1997, it was 14 percent);
- ◆ Final action on legislative measures in house of origin by the 48th day; and
- ◆ Final action on legislative measures in second house by the 76th day.

Work Week: With a few exceptions just before deadlines, the average work week for the Kansas Legislature is from Monday morning through Friday noon — **4 ½ days.**

Budget: The Governor is required to submit his or her proposed budget to the Legislature by the 8th day of session (21st day if a new Governor has just assumed office). The budget and all appropriations bills must be passed by the 90th day of session. There is no separate legislative budget.

Adjournment and Veto Session: The Kansas Legislature typically adjourns for two weeks on the 87th calendar day. Members return for three final days to consider vetoed measures and pass the final budget and omnibus appropriations measures.

Joint Rules: Joint rules are used to implement most of the important deadlines and schedules used in Kansas.

F. Montana

Population: Currently estimated at approximately **875,000.**

State Capitol: Helena. Geographically, Montana is the fourth largest state in the nation (Nevada ranks seventh largest). Like Nevada, a significant percentage of the population lives over a hundred miles from the State Capitol.

Montana Legislature: Total of **150 members** (50 Senators and 100 Representatives).

Sessions: Biennial, limited to 90 legislative days. No **special sessions** since 1993. Regular sessions convene on the **first Monday of January** in odd-numbered years. The 1997 Session began on January 6 and ended on April 23 (85 legislative days and 108 calendar days). In 1995, the session began on January 2 and ended on April 13 (87 legislative days and 102 calendar days).

Committees: In 1997, the Montana Legislature had 17 Senate committees and 16 House committees. The committees are quite parallel in structure, although not exact. Additionally, joint appropriations subcommittees are used extensively during the budget review process.

Bills: In 1995, 1,096 bills were introduced. Of this total, 643 eventually were approved and signed into law (59 percent). In 1997, 1,088 bills were introduced and 608 were approved (57 percent). There were 127 **prefiled bills and resolutions** in 1995, and 311 in 1997.

Bill Drafting: All legislative measures are drafted by the Legal Services Division of the Montana Legislature. In general, only legislators may submit bill draft requests. However, by legislative/executive agreement, the Governor's Budget Office may submit some subject requests for drafting. The listing of bill draft requests maintained by Legal Services is totally public, including the names of all requesting legislators. There is a designation of "hold" shown on all BDRs that are not being processed by Legal Services because of insufficient information and direction from the requesting legislator. Bills requested by individual legislators after the start of session and bills in "hold" status after the tenth legislative day are given the lowest priority for drafting.

Limits on Bill Draft Requests: Prior to December 5 in even-numbered years, there is no limit. Each member may also request an additional seven measures after that date; five of which must be requested before the start of session. A member may transfer his or her unused bill draft requests to another member within the deadlines. Standing committee requests are **not** covered by these deadlines.

Deadlines: With a few exceptions, the following deadlines applied during the 1997 Session:

- ◆ **General bills and resolutions from individual members must be requested for drafting by the 10th day of session; revenue bills by the 17th day; general bills and resolutions from standing committees by the 36th day; committee tax/revenue bills by the 62nd day; and interim study resolutions and committee appropriations bills by the 75th day.**
- ◆ **Bills and resolutions MUST be introduced within two legislative days after they are drafted and delivered to the requesting member or committee.**
- ◆ **Excluding appropriations and tax/revenue bills, all legislative measures must be transmitted from the house of origin to the second house by the 45th legislative day of session. Amendments made in the second house must be transmitted to the house of origin no later than the 73rd legislative day.**
- ◆ **House of origin action on tax/revenue bills by the 71st day, and second house action by the 82nd day.**

- ◆ **Appropriations measures must be approved in second legislative house by the 80th legislative day. Interim study resolutions to second house by the 85th legislative day.**

Work Week: The Montana Legislature typically works and is in session from Monday through Saturday — **6 days per week.**

Budget: The Governor is required by statute to submit certain budget documents and proposals to the Legislature in October, November, and December in the year immediately preceding a regular session. The Legislature typically does not approve the final biennial budget until the last day of session.

G. Texas

Population: Currently estimated at approximately **19 million**, ranking second among the states.

State Capitol: **Austin**, which is located in the central part of the state.

Texas Legislature: Total of **181 members** (31 Senators and 150 Representatives).

Sessions: Texas, like Nevada, has a **biennial** Legislature which holds its regular sessions in odd-numbered years. The Texas Legislature begins session on the **second Tuesday in January** and is limited to **140 calendar days**. In 1997, the Legislature convened on January 14 and adjourned on June 2. There have been **no special sessions since 1992.**

Committees: In 1997, the Texas Senate had 12 standing committees and two special committees. The Texas House of Representatives had 36 standing committees, including four committees relating to calendars, rules, or procedures. There are rarely joint committees or joint meetings of committees during session. During the interim, the standing committees of each house conduct interim studies.

Bills: Because Texas has a large population, it is no surprise that its Legislature processes a huge volume of bills each session. During the 1997 Session, there were 5,629 bills and joint resolutions introduced and 1,495 (27 percent) passed. Of the total number of measures introduced, 595 (approximately 11 percent of the total) were prefiled before session. The earliest date for pre-filing bills is the Monday after the general election in even-numbered years.

Bill Drafting: The Legal Division of the Texas Legislative Council is the primary bill drafting office for the Legislature and drafts approximately 80 percent of all legislative measures. The other 20 percent of the bills and resolutions are drafted by the Senate Office of Enrolling and Engrossing, individual legislators, and staff working for individual legislators or committees. There are no limits on the number of bills that a legislator may request to be drafted, but only members of the Legislature and the Lieutenant Governor, or their staff members, are authorized to make such requests. As a courtesy, the attorneys working for the Legislative Council draft

approximately 100 bills each session for the Executive Branch of state government. No other entities may request bills or amendments.

Deadlines: With a few exceptions, the following deadlines apply during session:

- ◆ **Bill introductions by the 60th calendar day (rule can be suspended by four-fifths of members of the Senate or House, but House members rarely request that the rule be suspended);**
- ◆ **Last day for bills to be reported out of House committee is the 119th calendar day;**
- ◆ **Final action by House on House bills by the 122nd calendar day;**
- ◆ **Last day for bills to be reported out of Senate committee is the 125th calendar day;**
- ◆ **Final action by House on Senate bills by the 134th calendar day; and**
- ◆ **Final action by Senate on all bills by the 135th calendar day.**

Work Week: For the first 90 days of session, the typical work week for the Legislature is from Monday morning through noon on Thursday — **3 ½ days**. From around the 91st day until around the 120th day of session, the typical work week extends until Friday at noon — **4 ½ days**. Beginning around the 121st day, the work week extends to Friday afternoons and Saturdays — **6 days**. During the last week of session the Legislature meets on both Saturdays and Sundays — **7 days**.

Budget: The budget in Texas is prepared by the staff of the Legislative Budget Board which is a ten-member joint Senate-House agency comprised of the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House, the chairmen of the budget committees in each house, and other key legislators. The Governor's budget, when one is submitted, is never seriously considered by the Legislature. There are no specific deadlines for introducing or passing the budget, but it is usually passed during the final days of session.

End-of-Session Rules: Under end-of-session rules which have been adopted separately by the Senate and House, the last five days of session are reserved for considering and acting on amendments made by the other house, conference committee reports, and technical corrections. **Texas does not have joint rules.**

III. KEY TECHNIQUES TO SPEED UP SESSION

In reviewing the recommendations made by previous Nevada studies and analyzing the procedures used in other states, several key techniques to speed up session have been identified. As presented below, these techniques are grouped in the categories of presession activities; limits on bill draft requests; deadlines for introducing and acting on bills; committee structure; budget review; and

other miscellaneous techniques. Following each technique are listed the previous Nevada studies which have recommended such action, if any. Also listed are those states (of the six analyzed in this report) which use the particular technique.

A. Pre-session Activities

1. Prefiling a Significant Number of Bills²⁴
 - Other States: **Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Montana, and Texas**
2. Organizational Meetings of Standing Committees Prior to Session
 - Previous Nevada Studies: **“Prospect for Greatness” (1974), and “Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedures” (1974)**
3. Early Submission of Interim Study Reports and Recommendations
 - Previous Nevada Studies: **“Prospect for Greatness” (1974), and “Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedures” (1974)**
 - Other States: **Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Montana, and Texas**

B. Limits on Bill Draft Requests/Introductions

1. Significant Limits on Numbers of Bills
 - Other States: **Colorado and Montana**
2. Restricting Bill Draft Requests to Legislative Members and Committees
 - Other States: **Alaska, Arizona, and Colorado** (Kansas, Montana, and Texas allow for the drafting of a limited number of bills requested by the Governor or certain Executive Branch agencies, but these states do not allow bill draft requests from any other agencies or organizations.)
3. Limiting Bill Draft Requests by Standing Committees

Other States: **Colorado**

²⁴In the 1997 Legislative Session, there were a total of 56 legislative measures prefiling in Nevada. This represents only 4 percent of the total number of measures introduced. Of the six states analyzed, only Kansas prefiling a smaller percentage (3 percent) of the total number of measures it introduced in 1997. All five of the other states prefiling a significant percentage of the total number of legislative measures introduced in 1997: Alaska (22 percent), Arizona (18 percent), Colorado (17 percent), Montana (29 percent), and Texas (11 percent).

C. **Deadlines for Drafting, Introducing, and Acting on Bills**

1. Deadlines for Submitting Bill Draft Requests

- Previous Nevada Studies: **“Prospect for Greatness” (1974), and “Study of Establishing a Legislative Budget Office” (1994)**
- Other States: **Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, and Montana**

2. Deadlines for Completing Initial Bill Drafting

- Other States: **Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, and Montana**

3. Deadlines for Bill Introductions

- Previous Nevada Studies: **“Legislative Techniques” (1969), “Prospect for Greatness” (1974), “Blue Ribbon Commission” (1988), and “Structure and Functioning of the Legislative Counsel Bureau” (1994)**
- Other States: **Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Montana, and Texas**

4. Deadlines for Committee Action

- Previous Nevada Studies: **“Legislative Techniques” (1969), “Prospect for Greatness” (1974), and “Blue Ribbon Commission” (1988)**
- Other States: **Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, and Texas**

5. Deadlines for Floor Action

- Previous Nevada Studies: **“Legislative Techniques” (1969), “Prospect for Greatness” (1974), and “Blue Ribbon Commission” (1988)**
- Other States: **Colorado, Kansas, Montana, and Texas**

6. Adoption of Time Line for Overall Legislative Session

- Previous Nevada Studies: **“Legislative Techniques” (1969), “Prospect for Greatness” (1974), and “Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedures” (1974)**
- Other States: **Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, and Montana**

D. Committee Structure

1. Limiting Number of Standing Committees

- Previous Nevada Studies: **“Legislative Techniques” (1969), “Prospect for Greatness” (1974), and “Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedures” (1974)**
- Other States: **Alaska and Colorado**

2. Creating Parallel Committees of Same Jurisdiction in Both Houses

- Previous Nevada Studies: **“Legislative Techniques” (1969), “Prospect for Greatness” (1974), “Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedures” (1974), and “Blue Ribbon Commission” (1988)**
- Other States: **Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, and Montana**

3. Using Joint Committees or Joint Hearings During Session

- Previous Nevada Studies: **“Legislative Techniques” (1969), “Prospect for Greatness” (1974), “Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedures” (1974), “Blue Ribbon Commission” (1988), “Study of State Budget Process” (1990), and “Study of Establishing a Legislative Budget Office” (1994)**
- Other States: **Alaska** (Most of the five other states only use joint committees or subcommittees for special purposes, such as budget review.)

4. Using Standing Committees to Conduct Interim Studies

- Previous Nevada Studies: **“Prospect for Greatness” (1974), and “Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedures” (1974)**
- Other States: **Alaska and Texas**

E. Budget Review

1. Early Submission and/or Review of Executive Budget

- Previous Nevada Studies: **“Blue Ribbon Commission” (1988), “Study of State Budget Process” (1990), and “Study of Establishing a Legislative Budget Office” (1994)**

- Other States: **Alaska, Kansas, and Montana**
- 2. Development of State Budget by Legislative Branch
 - Other States: **Arizona, Colorado, and Texas**
- 3. Deadlines for Budget Approval
 - Previous Nevada Studies: **“Study of State Budget Process” (1990)**
 - Other States: **Arizona, Colorado, and Kansas**

F. Other Techniques

1. Legislative Commitment to Enforcing Adopted Techniques
 - Other States: **Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Montana, and Texas**
2. Special Rules for Final Weeks of Session
 - Other States: **Colorado and Texas**
3. More Extensive Development and Use of Fiscal Notes
 - Previous Nevada Studies: **“Prospect for Greatness” (1974), and “Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedures” (1974)**
 - Other States: **Colorado and Kansas**
4. Limiting Floor Time for Memorials, Commendations, and Ceremonial Events
 - Previous Nevada Studies: **“Legislative Techniques” (1969), “Counsel Bureau Organization and Legislative Procedures” (1974), and “Structure and Functioning of the Legislative Counsel Bureau” (1994)**
 - Other States: **Colorado and Kansas**

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APPENDIX A

"Limiting Bill Introductions," by Brenda Erickson.
NCSL *Legisbrief* (Volume I, No. 5), February 1993

LIMITING BILL INTRODUCTIONS

By Brenda Erickson

Each year, more and more bills clog the legislative process as constituents and interest groups insist "there ought to be a law" for every public problem. The steady increase in the number of bills has led some observers of the lawmaking system to label legislatures as "bill factories." In response to this concern, many chambers have experimented with ways to curb the amount of legislation entering the process. While deadline systems and proposed or short-form bills are commonly used, the most direct approach is to set a numerical limit on bill introductions. Experience has shown that no one mechanism is a panacea, and the most successful states combine two or more limitation methods.

Seventeen chambers set limits.

According to a 1991 survey of legislative clerks and secretaries, 16 legislative chambers limit the number of bills that may be introduced by each member. The Nebraska Legislature does not restrict proposals by individual lawmakers, but each committee is limited to eight bills per session.

Chambers that Limit the Number of Introductions by Members

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| California Senate | Michigan Senate and House |
| Colorado Senate and House | Montana Senate and House |
| Florida House | Nevada Senate and Assembly |
| Hawaii House | North Dakota Senate and House |
| Indiana Senate and House | Tennessee Senate |

A description of selected limits.

Below are examples of the rules or policies set by the chambers using numerical limits.

- Colorado** Joint Rule 24 (b)(1)(A) states that a member of the General Assembly may not introduce more than five bills in a regular session, excluding bills for appropriations and other selected types of bills.
- Florida** The Florida House of Representatives sets its bill introduction limit by policy rather than by chamber rule. Representatives may author only eight bills each year.
- Indiana** In Indiana, bill limits are enforced only during the second regular session of the biennium. Rule 109(a) allows each House member to introduce up to five bills. According to Rule 61(b), there is no limit on the number of bills filed by each senator before the first session day in January; after session convenes, no senator may file more than one bill per session day through the fourth session day, which is the last day for filing bills.
- Montana** Joint Rule 40-40 allows members of the Montana Legislature to request an unlimited number of bills before a set date (December 5 last biennium); after that date, a member may request the Legislative Council to prepare no more than seven bills or resolutions. Unused requests by one member may be granted to another member. Certain types of bills and resolutions are exempt from the limitations.

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- North Dakota According to Joint Rule 402, no bill can be introduced after the 14th legislative day and no member other than the majority and minority leaders may introduce more than three bills as prime sponsor after the ninth legislative day.
- Tennessee Rule 25 allows each member of the Senate to pre-file as many bills and resolutions as that member desires before the convening of the January organizational session of the General Assembly; however, after the third legislative day of each regular annual session, each senator is limited to nine general bill introductions. The rule does not apply to administration bills of the governor or bills introduced by a committee chairman at the direction of the committee.

State legislatures with limitations on bill introduction generally provide some sort of "escape clause" under which they may sidestep the rules for emergencies. For example, in Colorado, permission to exceed the limit may be given by the Senate or House Committee on Delayed Bills. The consent of a two-thirds majority of the members elected to the Indiana House of Representatives is needed to introduce bills after the deadline. The numerical limit also does not apply to bills filed in the name of the Committee on Rules and Legislative Procedure. In the Indiana Senate, approval by the Rules and Legislative Procedures Committee is needed to introduce bills after the deadline. In the Tennessee Senate, bills and resolutions may be introduced after its cut-off dates only with unanimous consent of the Committee on Delayed Bills or upon motion approved by two-thirds vote of the members of the Senate.

There are escape clauses.

Proponents feel that bill limits reduce the number of "hero bills" going through the system. The idea is not to restrict lawmakers' work, but to reduce the amount of time spent on superfluous proposals and to allow more time for substantive legislation. Most legislators do not have enough time to read and understand all bills. Bill limits help streamline the legislative process and reduce costs for staff, printing and paper.

Pros and cons

Although never challenged in court, the constitutionality of a limitation on the number of bills a legislator may introduce has been questioned. Opponents feel that such limits restrict members' rights to propose bills and carry out their legislative responsibilities. Bill limits might interfere with legislators' ability to respond to emergencies or the problems of changing times. Numerical limitation requires monitoring, so additional staff time is used to track the number of bills introduced by each lawmaker. Limits also may lead to the introduction of bills more general in nature and scope, resulting in "Christmas tree" bills rather than ones targeted to specific problems.

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APPENDIX B

"Legislative Box Score"
1995 and 1997 Sessions of the Nevada Legislature

LEGISLATIVE BOX SCORE
1995 Session of the Nevada Legislature

ASSEMBLY

	Legislation Introduced	Legislation Enacted	Legislation Vetoed	Vetoed Sustained
Bills.....	743	392	3*	2
Vetoed Bills of 67th Session.....	....	....	2	2
Joint Resolutions.....	43	31	....	....
Joint Resolutions of 67th Session.....	4	4	....	....
Concurrent Resolutions.....	53	40	....	....
One-House Resolutions.....	17	16	....	....
Totals.....	<u>860</u>	<u>483</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>

SENATE

Bills.....	582	338	3**	....
Vetoed Bills of 67th Session.....	....	....	3	3
Joint Resolutions.....	26	22	....	....
Joint Resolutions of 67th Session.....	4	3	....	....
Concurrent Resolutions.....	62	44	....	....
One-House Resolutions.....	13	13	....	....
Totals.....	<u>687</u>	<u>420</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>

BOTH HOUSES

Bills.....	1325	730	6	2
Vetoed Bills of 67th Session.....	....	....	5	5
Joint Resolutions.....	69	51	....	....
Joint Resolutions of 67th Session.....	8	7	....	....
Concurrent Resolutions.....	115	84	....	....
One-House Resolutions.....	30	29	....	....
Totals.....	<u>1547</u>	<u>903</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>7</u>

*A.B. 367 to be returned to 1997 Session.

**To be returned to 1997 Session.

LEGISLATIVE BOX SCORE

1997 Session of the Nevada Legislature

ASSEMBLY

	Legislation Introduced	Legislation Enacted	Legislation Vetoed	Legislation Sustained
Bills.....	670	384	*2	....
Vetoed Bills of 68th Session .....	....	....	1	1
Joint Resolutions.....	21	12	....	....
Joint Resolutions of 68th Session	6	4	....	....
Concurrent Resolutions.....	59	45	....	....
One-House Resolutions.....	18	18	....	....
Totals	774	463	3	1

SENATE

	Legislation Introduced	Legislation Enacted	Legislation Vetoed	Legislation Sustained
Bills.....	497	307	1	1
Vetoed Bills of 68th Session .....	....	....	3	3
Joint Resolutions.....	19	10	....	....
Joint Resolutions of 68th Session	5	2	....	....
Concurrent Resolutions.....	63	55	....	....
One-House Resolutions.....	11	11	....	....
Totals	595	385	4	4

BOTH HOUSES

	Legislation Introduced	Legislation Enacted	Legislation Vetoed	Legislation Sustained
Bills.....	1167	691	3	1
Vetoed Bills of 68th Session .....	....	....	4	4
Joint Resolutions.....	40	22	....	....
Joint Resolutions of 68th Session	11	6	....	....
Concurrent Resolutions.....	122	100	....	....
One-House Resolutions.....	29	29	....	....
Totals	1369	848	7	5

*A.B. 596, A.B. 512 to be returned to 1999 session.

APPENDIX C

"Nevada Legislature - 1993, 1995, and 1997 — Bill Introductions by Week" (Table)
and
"Bill Introductions — Nevada Legislature 1995 and 1997" (Chart)

NEVADA LEGISLATURE - 1993, 1995, AND 1997

BILL INTRODUCTIONS BY WEEK

**REVISED
(July 7, 1997)**

TOTAL BILL INTRODUCTIONS BY WEEK OF:

	WK. 1	WK. 2	WK. 3	WK. 4	WK. 5	WK. 6	WK. 7	WK. 8	WK. 9	WK. 10	WK. 11	WK. 12	WK. 13	WK. 14	WK. 15	WK. 16	WK. 17	WK. 18	WK. 19	WK. 20	WK. 21	WK. 22	WK. 23	FINAL WK.
1997																								
SENATE	30*	103	123	134	148	160	197	220	231	248	268	288	318	328	355	383	400	421	416	448	466	473	484	497
ASSEMBLY	46*	112	154	175	196	211	245	275	296	318	332	356	388	417	452	472	501	528	559	572	605	613	657	670
Total	76	215	277	309	344	371	442	495	527	566	600	644	706	745	807	855	901	949	995	1,020	1,071	1,106	1,141	1,167
*Includes 21 Senate and 32 Assembly bills that were prefiled before the 1997 Session convened. <i>Sine Die</i> : July 7, 1997																								
1995																								
SENATE	127*	144	192	192	192	216	249	265	287	313	335	363	380	397	470	456	475	490	521	547	559	566	571	582
ASSEMBLY	78*	116	177	177	177	281	291	323	361	399	427	462	492	513	543	570	602	618	665	683	712	726	730	743
Total	203	260	369	369	369	497	540	588	648	712	762	825	872	910	963	1,026	1,077	1,108	1,186	1,230	1,271	1,292	1,301	1,325
*Includes 110 Senate and 72 Assembly bills that were prefiled before the 1995 Session convened Legislative Adjournment: February 6 through February 17, 1995 <i>Sine Die</i> : July 3, 1995																								
1993																								
SENATE	108	155	218	218	218	240	268	288	317	332	365	387	409	419	437	455	475	491	509	531	544	555	567	574
ASSEMBLY	141	184	264	264	264	294	322	350	385	421	452	475	511	535	557	603	633	667	692	735	751	774	784	791
Total	249	339	482	482	482	534	590	638	702	753	817	862	920	954	994	1,058	1,108	1,158	1,201	1,266	1,295	1,329	1,351	1,365
Legislative Adjournment: February 8 through February 19, 1993 <i>Sine Die</i> : July 2, 1993																								

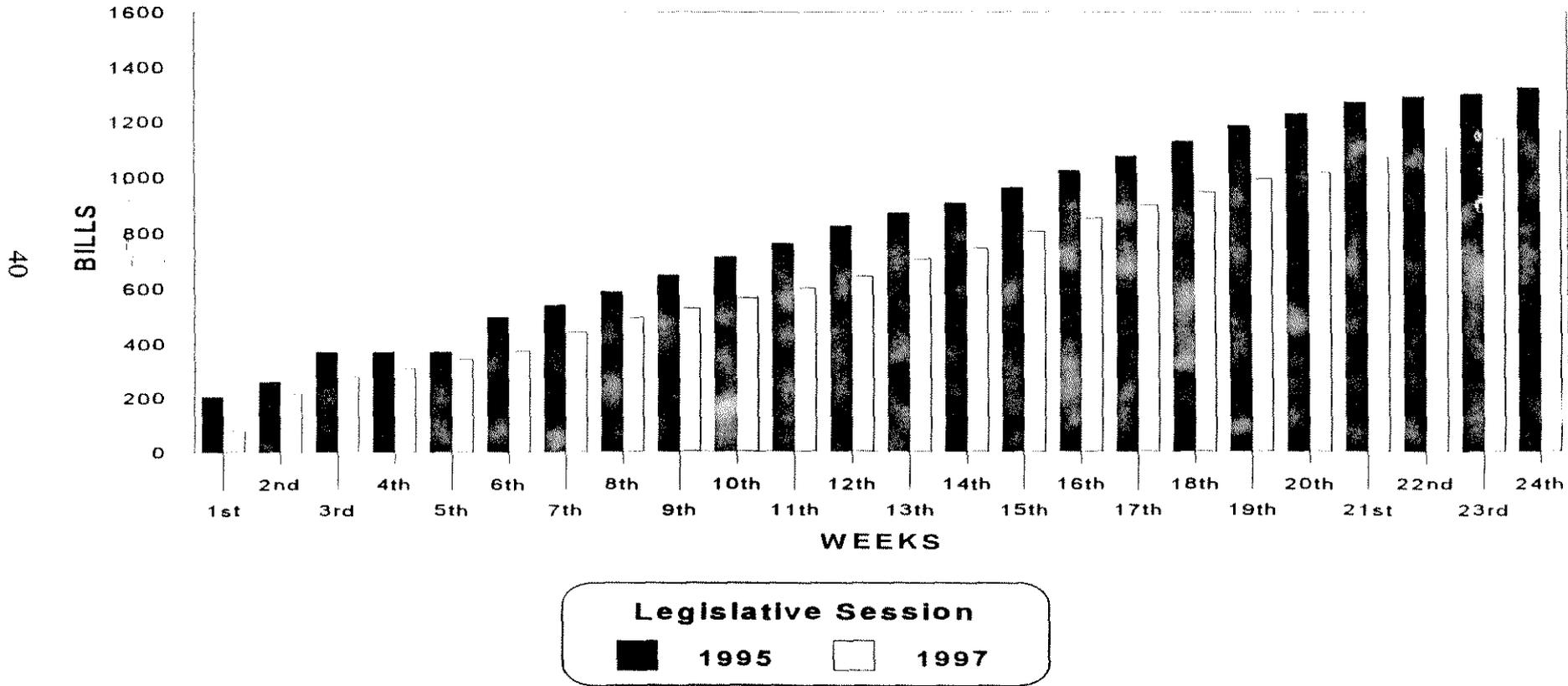
Compiled by the Research Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau
Revised: July 7, 1997

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BILL INTRODUCTIONS

Nevada Legislature 1995 and 1997

(July 7, 1997)



Compiled by the Research Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau - Revised: July 7, 1997

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APPENDIX D

“Contact Persons in Other States for 120-Day Session Project”

**CONTACT PERSONS IN OTHER STATES FOR
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