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STRUCTURE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

Material Prepared for the

Subcommittee on Legislative Powers and Functions

of the

State Constitution Committee

Hawaii Statehood Commission

January, 1948 Legislative Reference Bureau University of Hawaii

STATE OF HAWAII

JAN 31 2018

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

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### STRUCTURE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

## A. The Unicameral and the Bicameral Legislature

The question of the structure of state legislative bodies is one which has received a great amount of attention in recent years, particularly since Nebraska adopted the unicameral, or one-house, legislature in 1934.

Two of the thirteen original states, Georgia and Pennsylvania, had unicameral legislatures when the Constitution of the United States was adopted. However, Georgia abandoned this system in 1789 and Pennsylvania quickly followed in 1790. Vermont, at the time of its admission into the Union, had a unicameral legislature which was created in 1777 but it was finally changed to a bicameral, or two-house, legislature in 1836. Though these three states had what purported to be a one-house legislature, each had a council or board of censors which operated independently and acted in some respects as a second house.

Since 1836 and until 1934 every state has maintained such a legislature under the theory of checks and balances. The principle of the two-house legislature has come to be accepted as an axiom of American government.

Beginning about 1910, there were numerous proposals for a one-house legislature, a few of them from governors of states, some from legislators, some at constitutional conventions, and largely from unofficial sources. In three states, Oregon, Oklahoma and Arizona, proposals for one-house legislatures were submitted to popular vote. In Oregon the proposal was voted upon twice, in 1912 and 1914, and defeated. The New York Constitutional Convention of 1915 received three proposals for a one-house legislature which were reported adversely by the Committee on Legislative Organization and were

were never brought to a vote.1

In 1931 and 1933, unicameral amendments were introduced in six states. The interest in the unicameral movement increased considerably after the people of Nebraska adopted a constitutional amendment in 1934 providing for a one-house legislature. In 1935 and 1936 measures were proposed in approximately twelve states. The greatest interest in the unicameral movement was shown in 1937 when over forty measures providing for single house legislatures were considered by twenty-one of the forty-three state legislatures in session that year. These states were: Arkansas, California, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.<sup>2</sup>

The most recent unicameral proposal may be found in Missouri where the voters authorized such a legislative system. This created an unusual situation in that the state constitutional convention rejected the proposal, retaining the two-house system in the new constitution which was ratified by the voters on February 22, 1945.

The advantages and disadvantages of both the unicameral and bicameral systems have been discussed in numerous books and articles by political scientists and legislators. By implication, the case for and against unicameralism is found in the attributes and failings of bicameralism. The arguments for bicameralism imply those against unicameralism, and the arguments against bicameralism may be used in supporting unicameralism.

New York (State). Constitutional Convention Committee. Problems Relating to Legislative Organization and Powers. (Vol. VII.) p. 126.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Alvin W. Johnson. <u>The Unicameral Legislature</u>. p. 95.

The principal arguments for bicameralism may be summarized as follows:

- 1. One house serves as a check upon the other, preventing hurried and careless legislation, thus bringing about better legislation.
- 2. Bicameralism provides security against scheming politicians and special interest lobbies.
- 3. The two-house legislature is more difficult to corrupt than the one-house legislature.
- 4. The two-house system makes the division of legislative functions possible.
- 5. Bicameralism is a deterrent to the usurpation to power by the legislature and tends to minimize despotic trends in government.
- 6. Bicameralism is a means for providing more adequate representation of different groups and geographical areas.
  - 7. The two-house legislature is the traditional type of legislature.

The defects of the two-house legislature may also be used as arguments for the one-house system:

- The two-house legislature is expensive.
- 2. In actual practice, one house does not act as a check upon the other.
- 3. The two-house legislature is slow moving and poor legislation results because of undue delay.
- 4. Bicameralism encourages shifting of responsibility from one house to the other.
  - 5. The organization of the two-house legislature is cumbersome.
- 6. The two-house legislature does not provide an adequate means of representation, especially where there is a system of representation by geo-

graphical areas as the control of one house is thus placed in the hands of a relatively small number of people.

7. The necessity to resort to the device of the Free-Conference

Committee when both houses of the legislature are unable to agree permits practices inimicable to the best interests of the state.

Theoretically, the case for unicameralism may be summarized as follows:

- 1. Legislative responsibility is concentrated upon one house, which tends to make the legislator take his task more seriously and perform more adequately.
  - 2. The cost of a unicameral legislature is less.
- 3. The added prestige and importance of membership in the one-house legislature should attract better qualified people, thus improving the calibre of membership in the legislature.
- 4. The elimination of the retarding effects of double committee and house action speeds up legislation.
  - 5. The one-house legislature minimizes the shifting of responsibility
- 6. When coupled with a system of proportional representation, the unicameral legislature is more representative of the people.

The principal argument against the one-house legislature has been the lack of the check which is automatically provided by a two-house legislature. Other reasons advanced against the one-house system are:

- 1. Unicameralism increases the power of any party machine and special interest which may have secured control.
- 2. Unicameralism provides for domination of the state with its diverse interests by urban interests.
  - 3. The opportunity for the public to organize its defenses against

undesirable legislation is smaller as the delay resulting from the necessity of passage by two houses is not present in the one-house legislature.

- 4. The one-house legislature will tend to become despotic and avaricious.
- 5. Unicameralism does not assure better legislation as bills are often improved after consideration by committees of both houses in the two-house legislature.

The Model State Constitution prepared by the Committee on State Government of the National Municipal League advocates the one-chamber system.<sup>3</sup> The Committee believes "that a single body, chosen by proportional representation and not too large in number, will be at once more representative and efficient than the present two-chamber system."

# B. General Description of State Legislatures (See Appendix I)

The state constitutions west legislative power in bodies which exactly half of the states refer to as the "Legislature." Nebraska, with its one-chamber legislature, is included in this number. Of the remaining states, nineteen use the term "General Assembly"; Massachusetts and New Hampshire call their legislative body the "General Court"; while Montana, North Dakota, and Oregon refer to it as the "Legislative Assembly."

Forty-seven of the forty-eight states have bicameral legislatures with the upper chamber known officially as the "Senate." With regard to the name of the lower chamber, thirty-nine states call this body the "House of Representatives." In California, Nevada, New York, and Wisconsin it is called the

<sup>3</sup> National Municipal League. "Model State Constitution." Sec. 301.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

"Assembly"; in New Jersey, the "General Assembly"; and in Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia, the "House of Delegates."

#### 1. Size

The number of members composing the state legislatures varies widely, and the only rule observed in every state is that the upper chamber is a smaller body than the lower chamber. In many cases the exact number of members is determined in the constitution. On the other hand, in several states a maximum to which the legislature may increase its own number is fixed, and in a few cases a minimum is fixed.

The smallest senates are found in Delaware and Nevada with 17 members each; the largest are in Minnesota, with 67, and Montana, with 56 members. Nine senates have less than 30 members, and only nine 6 have 50 or more. Eighteen 7 comprise the group of senates whose membership falls between 30 and 39 and the remaining eleven 8 are between 40 and 49.

It is found that the membership of the lower chamber rises to the largest proportions in the northeastern states, especially in the New England states, with their relatively small populations and large numbers of districts, and where the basis of representation is the town. The largest lower chambers are in New Hampshire, with 399, and in Connecticut, with 272 members; the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Arizona, Delaware, Maryland, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>California, Idaho, Kansas, Massachusetts, Mississippi, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Virginia, Washington.

smallest are found in Delaware, with 35 members, and Nevada with 40. The distribution by groups is as follows:

#### Members

#### States

50 or less - 4 states (Delaware, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico)

- 51 to 100 21 states (Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Montana, New Jersey, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming)
- 101 to 150 14 states (Alabama, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas)
- 151 to 200 2 states (Illinois, Maine)
- 201 to 300 5 states (Connecticut, Georgia, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Vermont)
- 301 to 400 1 state (New Hampshire)

### 2. Sessions

a. Regular Sessions ((1) Annual and Biennial). Only six of the state legislatures (California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and South Carolina) hold annual sessions. All of the others meet biennially, usually beginning in the month of January of the odd-numbered years with Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Virginia meeting in even-numbered years.

A constitutional amendment adopted in California in November, 1946, provides for two kinds of annual legislative sessions, in alternate years. The legislature meets in regular session in odd-numbered years while sessions held in even-numbered years are designated budget sessions and commence on the first Monday in March. At budget sessions, the legislature is restricted to consideration of the budget, necessary revenue acts, urgency measures, acts calling elections, proposed constitutional amendments, and charter amendments.

The proposal for a similar type of annual legislative session will be

submitted to the voters in the state of Maryland in 1948. The legislature in Maryland now meets biennially in odd-numbered years.

State legislative sessions differ widely in length. In twenty-one states there is no constitutional limit on the length of the regular session. In the rest, the session is limited specifically or the same effect is reached by prescribing the maximum number of days for which compensation may be paid, and occasionally both will be found. Of those states having constitutional limitations, sixteen fix the limit at 60 days while the remaining have limitations ranging from 36 days in Alabama to 150 days in Connecticut.

The Model State Constitution provides that the legislature be "a continuous body during the biennium for which its members are elected," meeting "in regular sessions quarterly or at such times as may be prescribed by law." Dr. Guild in commenting on the legislative provisions of the Model State Constitution states that "the periodic piling high of the legislative hopper, the waste of legislative time waiting for committees to digest hundreds of bills, and the frantic congestion of the closing days of the session, all because legislation must come only once in two years, has long been noted as a grave evil. "ll

((2) <u>Split Sessions</u>). With very few exceptions, state legislative sessions are continuous from the date of convening until adjournment. There are several states that have constitutional provisions authorizing the use of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, Wisconsin.

<sup>10</sup> National Municipal League. Op. cit., Sec. 307.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

split, or bifurcated, session plan by which the legislature meets for approximately a month to organize, introduce bills, etc. At the expiration of this period there follows a recess to enable the members to study the contents of bills which had been introduced and which are to be voted upon later when the legislature reconvenes.

California has used the split session system since a constitutional amendment adopted in 1911. The legislature convenes for a period not exceeding thirty days after which a recess is taken for not less than thirty days. When it reassembles after the recess, no bills may be introduced in either house without the consent of three-fourths of the members. Constitutional provisions further limit the introduction of additional bills by prohibiting the introduction of more than two bills by any legislator after reassembling. 12

In 1940 the voters of New Mexico approved a constitutional amendment providing for the split session. Under this plan the legislature meets for thirty days, recesses for thirty days, and reconvenes for thirty days. Bills are introduced during the first period and acted upon during the last period. The New Mexico bifurcated plan differs from that of California in that the recess period is definitely limited to thirty days. Further, constitutional provisions limit the type of bills which may be introduced when the New Mexico legislature reassembles after the recess. 13

An amendment to the Georgia constitution in 1931 provided that the legislature meet in the month of January of the odd-numbered years for a period not over ten days, at which time the legislature should appoint committees for the regular sixty-day session. Provision was also made that the legislature could, by majority vote of both houses, adopt a concurrent resolution at its preliminary session, fixing a date for reconvening in the regular session

<sup>12</sup> California Constitution. Art. IV, Sec. 2.

<sup>13</sup> New Mexico Constitution. 'Art, IV, Sec. 5.

prior to the date set in the constitution.14

The revised constitution of 1945 eliminates the preliminary ten-day session but authorizes the legislature, by concurrent resolution adopted by a majority vote of both houses, to "adjourn any regular session to such later date as it may fix for reconvening." 15

Massachusetts adopted the bifurcated plan as early as 1831 but later abandoned it. A constitutional amendment adopted in 1918 provides that the legislature, "by concurrent vote of the two houses, may take a recess or recesses amounting to not more than thirty days; but no such recess shall extend beyond the sixtieth day from the date of their first assembling." However, the Massachusetts legislature has never voted to take the recess. 17

The constitutional amendment adopted in West Virginia in 1920 required the legislature to meet for an initial period of fifteen days in January, recess until the middle of the following March, and reconvene for a period not longer than forty-five days. This split session could be dispensed with upon the concurrence of two-thirds of all members. When the legislature reassembled, no bill could be introduced in either house without a three-fourths vote of all members. Seven years later, in 1927, the split session system in West Virginia was abolished.

<sup>14</sup>Commonwealth Club of California. "The Legislature of California: Its Membership, Procedure and Work." p. 159.

<sup>15</sup> Georgia Constitution. Art. III, Sec. IV, par. III.

<sup>16</sup> Massachusetts Constitution. Art. LII.

<sup>17</sup>A. W. Bromage. State Government and Administration in the United States. p. 228.

<sup>18</sup>M. L. Faust. "Results of the Split Session System of the West Virginia Legislature," <u>American Political Science Review</u>. (Vol. 22.) p. 111.

Alabama has also used the split session plan. Although the regular legislative session convenes on the first Tuesday in May, the legislature meets on the second Tuesday in January after election for ten consecutive days for the purpose of organizing. 19

The Texas constitution provides for a trifurcated legislative session plan under which the first thirty days of the regular session are devoted to the introduction of bills and resolutions, the succeeding thirty days for committee hearings, and the last sixty days for action upon the bills. A further provision permits either house to alter the order of business by a vote of four-fifths of its membership.<sup>20</sup> At each session, since the adoption of this amendment in 1929, the Texas legislators have taken advantage of the authorization to alter the legislative procedure, and by the four-fifths vote they have continued in session without the recess for committee hearings.<sup>21</sup>

b. <u>Special Sessions</u>. In all states, the governor has the power to call the legislature into special session and to designate the matters which the legislature may consider during the session. In a few states the governor, in addition to being empowered to call the legislature at his own discretion, must call a special session at the request of a specified majority of both houses of the legislature. An exception to the general rule is found in New Hampshire, whose constitution provides that the legislature may assemble at such other times as it may judge necessary.<sup>22</sup> However, the New Hampshire

<sup>19</sup>Council of State Governments. The Book of the States, Supplement, 1947. p. 15.

<sup>20</sup>Texas Constitution. Art. III, Sec. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Commonwealth Club of California. Op. cit., p. 160.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup>New Hampshire Constitution. Part II, Art. 3.

legislature has never judged a special session necessary.23

Modifications of the power of the governor to convene the legislature into special session are found in Louisiana and Virginia where the governor must call a special session upon petition of two-thirds of the members of each house. Similarly, in Georgia and West Virginia, upon petition of three-fifths of the membership in each house, and in Massachusetts and New Jersey, upon a majority of both houses, the governor is required to call a special session.

In Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and North Carolina, the governor's power to convene the legislature is qualified to the extent that he does so by and with the advice of the council of the state, a specially elected body in Massachusetts and New Hampshire and the elected state officers, ex officio, in North Carolina.

Two states, Georgia and Louisiana, by constitutional provision, 24 have dispelled any doubt of the power of the legislature to convene on its own initiative in the event the governor fails or refuses to call a special session upon petition of the requisite number of the members of each house. In Georgia, such a self-convened session is limited to 30 days, while in Louisiana where either the lieutenant governor or speaker of the house, or both of them, gives notice for convening the legislature into special session upon failure of the governor to do so, such a session is limited to the time specified in the petition.

<sup>23</sup> Joseph P. Chamberlain. <u>Legislative Processes: National and State</u>. p. 285.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup>Georgia Constitution. Art. V, Sec. I, par. 12; Louisiana Constitution. Art. V, Sec. 14.

In eighteen states, 25 the governor has complete control over the number and character of the subjects to be considered at a special session of the legislature, the legislature being prohibited by the constitution from dealing with other subjects. Only three states (Alabama, Arkansas, and Florida) specifically permit the legislature itself to suggest the consideration of additional business while in special session, and such permission is conditioned upon a two-thirds vote in each house. 26

Twenty-nine states do not limit the length of special sessions. In the rest, there is either an absolute limit in the constitution or the same effect is achieved by the stipulation of the maximum number of days for which the legislators may receive compensation at a special session. A grouping of these states shows that seven states<sup>27</sup> impose maxima of 20 days, while seven others<sup>28</sup> place the limit at 30 days. Arkansas and New Hampshire have a limit of 15 days; and in Alabama and Indiana, the special sessions are restricted to 36 and 40 days, respectively. Special sessions convoked by the governor in Georgia are limited to 70 days but self-convened sessions may last for only 30 days.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup>Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Tennessee, Utah, West Virginia.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup>Commonwealth Club of California. "The Legislature of California: Its Membership, Procedure, and Work." p. 166.

<sup>27</sup>Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, Tennessee.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup>Delaware, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Texas, Utah, Virginia.

## C. State Legislators

# 1. Qualifications (See Appendix II)

Formal requirements for the qualifications of members of the state legislatures are customary. Nearly all early state constitutions carried some religious or property qualification for members of the legislative body. These conditions were gradually dropped so that, in general, in most of the states today any person who is qualified to vote for the members of the state legislature may become a member himself. However, variations still exist among the states as regards specific qualifications incorporated in their constitutions.

The state constitutions are explicit regarding age qualification for membership in the legislature, stating either that a person shall have reached a certain age or that he shall be a duly qualified elector. Where there is an age qualification, most states do not have the same for members of both houses. Twenty-one years of age is most common for membership in the lower house, but Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri specify twenty-four years, while Arizona, Colorado, South Dakota, and Utah have an age qualification of twenty-five years. Age qualification for membership in the upper house differs widely. Montana specifies twenty-four years; Texas, twenty-six years; and Delaware, twenty-seven years. Six states (Kentucky, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Tennessee, and Vermont) have an age qualification of thirty years for membership in the upper house. Of the remaining states, twenty-five years is specified in twenty-one states<sup>29</sup> while the age of twenty-one years is implied in others.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup>Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia, Wyoming.

The requirement of citizenship is uniform; the state constitutions either state that a person must be a citizen in order to be a member of the legislature or require that he must be a duly qualified elector. Variation exists with regard to the length of citizenship. Maine specifies five years U. S. citizenship while Alabama and California have state citizenship requirements of three years. Georgia and New Jersey stipulate state citizenship of four years for the upper house and two years for the lower house.

Residence requirements in both the state and county for membership in the legislature exist in all state constitutions, either express or implied, ranging from one year to five years.

The constitutions also contain detailed provisions regarding ineligibility for membership in the state legislatures. In several states, no person
who has been convicted of embezzlement of public funds, of bribery, perjury,
or other infamous crime, or who has been adjudged guilty of a felony, may
hold a seat in the legislature. Some constitutions enumerate public offices
which create ineligibility for membership in the legislature. The most commonly mentioned offices are positions under the federal or state government, including positions as collector or holder of public moneys, court judge, clerk
of any court of record, sheriff, justice of the peace, secretary of state, and
attorney general.

State constitutions place few restrictions upon the organization and procedure of the legislature. Each house is made the judge of the elections and qualifications of its own members. In case any controversy arises concerning the validity of an election to a seat in either house, the house concerned may investigate the case and by a majority vote decide between the rival claimants. Likewise, if any question is raised involving the qualifications of persons elected to either house, that body may investigate and decide the

question of the eligibility of the person.

New Jersey was the first state to specify that the Assembly should be "judges of the qualifications and elections of their own members." In one form or another this specification is now found in the constitution of every state. Minnesota uses the word "eligibility" instead of "qualifications," and Maryland has the additional clause, "as prescribed by the Constitution and laws of the State."

The Model State Constitution provides that "the legislature shall be judge of the election, returns and qualifications of its members, and may by law vest in the courts the trial and determination of contested elections of members."33

## 2. Terms

In thirty-two states, the length of the term of members of the Senate is four years. In all other bicameral states, senatorial terms are two years. Nebraska, with its single chamber, has a two-year legislative term.

In the lower house, the term is two years in forty-three states, with Alabama. Louisiana. Maryland. and Mississippi having four-year terms.

A grouping of the states indicates that there are twenty-eight stated with four-year senators and two-year representatives. Four southern states—Alabama, Louisiana, Maryland, and Mississippi—have four-year senators and four-year representatives. The remaining states have two-year senators and two-year representatives.

<sup>30</sup>Robert Luce. <u>Legislative Assemblies</u>. p. 198.

<sup>31</sup> Minnesota Constitution. Art. IV, Sec. 3.

<sup>32</sup> Maryland Constitution. Art. III, Sec. 19.

<sup>33</sup> National Municipal League. \* "Model State Constitution." Sec. 308.

# 3. Salaries and Expenses (See Appendix III)

Legislative salaries wary in different states and regions. In 28 states 34 the salaries are now fixed by the constitution, while in the remaining 20 states this matter is determined by the legislative bodies themselves. In the latter case, provision is ordinarily made that such compensation may not be increased or decreased during the term for which the members have been elected.

The Committee on State Government of the National Municipal League believes that a statement of the exact amount of legislative salary does not belong in the constitution. Its recommendation as contained in the Model State Constitution is as follows: "The members of the legislature shall receive an annual salary, as may be prescribed by law, but the amount thereof shall neither be increased nor diminished during the term for which they are elected." 35

The Committee on Legislative Processes and Procedures of the Council of State Governments also believes that legislative salaries should not be fixed by constitutional provision, but rather, that "annual salaries sufficient to permit competent persons to serve in the legislatures without financial sacrifice should be provided by statute."<sup>36</sup>

The states are almost equally divided between two plans of remuneration,

<sup>34</sup>Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Washington.

<sup>35</sup> National Municipal League. Op. cit., Sec. 306.

<sup>36</sup> Lynton K. Caldwell. "Strengthening State Legislatures." American Political Science Review. (Vol., XLI, No. 2.) p. 283.

lump sum and per diem. In 27 states<sup>37</sup> the legislators are paid a lump sum per year, session, or biennium, this sum ranging from \$200 in New Hampshire to \$5,000 in Illinois for the biennium in those states which have biennial sessions, and from \$1,000 in South Carolina to \$2,500 in Massachusetts and New York per year in the five states using this method of payment in which annual sessions are held.

The second method of fixing legislative salaries is to pay a per diem allowance for actual attendance, which ranges from a minimum of \$3 in Kansas and Michigan to a maximum of \$20 in Louisiana. Six states<sup>38</sup> pay \$10 and five states<sup>39</sup> pay \$5; the remaining states are distributed as follows: Tennessee, \$4; Florida and Oklahoma, \$6; Arizona and Oregon, \$8; Wyoming, \$12; and Nevada, \$15. Of the 21 states whose legislators are paid on a per diem basis, the length of legislative sessions in all but the states of Michigan, Oklahoma, and Texas are limited specifically or the same effect is achieved either by fixing the number of days for which payments are authorized or by reducing the per diem amount after the expiration of a fixed number of days.

The Council of State Governments made a per diem comparison of legislative salaries in the 48 states by computing the daily amount which the legislators in lump-sum states would receive if their entire compensation was applied to the actual period of the session. The results of this study are as follows:

<sup>37</sup>Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine; Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin.

<sup>38</sup> Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Montana, New Mexico, Texas.

<sup>39</sup>Idaho, Kentucky, North Dakota, Rhode Island, Washington.

Per Diem Compensation of Legislators 40

Per Diem Payment	No. of States	States					
\$ 2.00	2	Connecticut, New Hampshire					
3.00	3	Kansas, Michigan, Oregon					
4.00	3	Maine, Tennessee, Utah					
5.00	8	Idaho, Maryland, Missouri, New Mexico, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Washington					
6.00	4	Florida, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Vermont					
7.00	3	Georgia, Massachusetts, Nebraska					
8,00	1	North Carolina					
10.00	14	Alabama, Colorado, Delaware, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, South Carolina, Texas, Wisconsin, Wyoming					
11.00	1	Minnesota					
12.00	1	Virginia					
15.00	1	Arizona					
17.00	2	Arkansas, West Virginia					
20.00	1	Ohio					
21.00	1	Illinois					
25.00	1	California					
28.00	1	Pennsylvania					
30.00	1	New York					

In 33 states, the legislators receive additional compensation for attendance at special sessions. With the exception of Missouri (\$125 per

<sup>40</sup>W. Brooke Graves. American State Government. p. 250.

month), Virginia (\$360 per session), and Pennsylvania (\$500 to \$750 per session), compensation for special sessions in these states is paid on a per diem basis and the sessions are usually limited. Fifteen states 4 do not pay their legislators additional compensation for special sessions, but in thirteen of these states the legislators are paid lump sum salaries. There are fourteen states 4 in which legislators receive a lump sum salary and are paid additional compensation when they are called back into special session.

In addition to their salaries, the legislators of all states, except
North Carolina, are granted allowances for travel expenses. The most common
mileage allowance, ten cents per mile, is paid by twenty states. Six states
(Arkansas, California, Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, and South Dakota)
allow five cents per mile; two (Connecticut and Tennessee) allow twenty-five
cents per mile; and allowances of seven, eight, fifteen and twenty cents per
mile are found in other states. Other variations are found in Maine whose
legislators are paid \$2 for ten miles; Missouri, \$1 for ten miles; and in
Texas, \$2.50 for twenty-five miles. Still other states pay what is claimed
as "actual travel expenses." There is little uniformity throughout the states
as to the actual amount received by legislators as some states have provisions
permitting mileage allowance for one round trip, a one way trip, or trips
once a week, while others make no specific provisions.

Several states grant additional allowances to their legislators for expenses such as maintenance, postage or other supplies. Michigan allows \$7.50

<sup>41</sup> California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island, Utah, West Virginia, Wisconsin.

<sup>42</sup> Arkansas, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, Virginia.

a day for living expenses while attending a legislative session; Alabama, California, and Washington grant \$10 per day. In Wisconsin, the legislators receive an additional \$5 expense allowance per regular session while Massachusetts grants \$10 basic allowance for general expenses for each week of the regular annual session. Delaware pays \$25 for stationery and other supplies for a regular session and \$10 for a special session. Pennsylvania recently enacted legislation which provides a \$1,200 a year expense account for its legislators.

THE STATE LEGISLATURES
Number of Members, Terms, and Sessions.

	Senate		House		Years in Which	_	Sessions Limit - Days	
State	No. of Members	Term of Years	No. of Members	Term of Years	Sessions Are Held	Days on Which Sessions Convene	Regular	Special
Alabama	35	4	106	4	Odd	First Tuesday in Mayl	36 ,	36
Arizona	19	2	58	2	Odd	Second Monday in January	602/	202/
Arkansas	35	4	100	2	Odd	Second Monday in January	60 . ,	15
California	40	4	80	2	Annual	First Mon. after first day in Jan. 3/	None4	None
Colorado	35	4	65	2	Odd	First Wednesday in January	None	None
Connecticut	36	2	272	2	Odd	Wed. after first Monday in Jan.	5 mos.	None,
Delaware -	17	4	35	2	oaa .	First Tuesday in January	602/	302/
Florida	38		95	2	0dd	First Tues, after first Mon. in Apr.	60	20
Georgia	. 54	4 2	205	2	Odd	Second Monday in January	70	705/
Idaho	44	2	49	2	Odd -	First Mon. after first day in Jan.	60	20
Illinois	51	4 `	153	2	0dd	Wednesday after first Monday in Jan.	None	None
Indiana	50	4	100	2	Ođđ	Thursday after first Monday in Jan.	61	40
Iowa	50	4	108	2	Odd	Second Monday in January	None	None
Kansas	40	4	125	2	Odd	Second Tuesday in January	None6/	None6/
Kentucky	38	4	100	2	Even	First Tues. after first Mon. in Jan.	60	None
Louisiana	39	4	100	4	Even	Second Monday in May	60	30
Maine	33	2	151	2	044	First Wednesday in January	None	None
Maryland	29	4	123	4	. Odd	First Wednesday in January	90	30
Massachusetts	40	Ž	240	2	Annual	First Wednesday in January	None	None
Michigan	32	2	100	2	Odd	First Wednesday in January	None	None
Minnesota	67	4	131	2	Odd	Tues, after first Mon. in Jan.	90	None
Mississippi	49	4	140	4	Even	Tues, after first Mon. in Jan.	None	None
Missouri	34	4	150	Ž	0dd	Wednesday after January 1	None	None
Montana	56	4	90	2	Odd	First Monday in January	60	None
Nebraska	437/	2		_	Odd	First Tuesday in January	None	None
Nevada	17	4	40	2	Odd	Third Monday in January		20
New Hampshire	24	2	399	2	Ođđ	First Wednesday in January	None	None 8
New Jersey	21	4	60	2	Annual	Second Tuesday in January	None	None
New Mexico	24	4	49	2	Odd	Second Tuesday in January	604/	None

# THE STATE LEGISLATURES Number of Members, Terms, and Sessions. (Cont.)

g: I	Senate		House		Years in Which		Sessions · Limit - Days	
State	No. of Members	Term of Years	No. of Members	Term of Years	Sessions Are Held	1	Regular	Special
New York	56	2	150	2	Annual	Wednesday after first Monday in Jan.	None	None
North Carolina	50	2	120	2	Odd	Wednesday after first Monday in Jan.	None	20
North Dakota	4 <del>9</del>	4	113	2	Odd	Tuesday after first Monday in Jan.	60	None
Ohio	33	2	136	2	Odd	First Monday in January	None	None
Oklahoma	44	4	120	2	Odd	Tuesday after first Monday in Jan.	None	None
Oregon	30	4	60	2	Odd	Second Monday in January	50	20
Pennsylvania	50	4	208	2	Odd	First Tuesday in January	None ,	None
Rhode Island	. 44	2	100	2	Annual	First Tuesday in January	None2/	None
South Carolina	46	4	124	2	Annual	Second Tuesday in January	None	None
South Dakota	35	2	75	2	Odd	Tuesday after first Monday in Jan.	60 ,	None
Tennessee	33	2	99	2	Odd	First Monday in January	None10	None 10
Texas	31	4	150	2	Odd	Second Tuesday in January	None	30
Utah	23	4	60	2	Odd	Second Monday in January	60	30
Vermont	30	2	246	2	0dd	Wednesday after first Monday in Jan.	None,	None
Virginia	40	4	100	2	Even	Second Wednesday in January	6011/	30
Washington	46	4	99	2	Odd	Second Monday in January	60	None
West Virginia	32	4	94	2	Odd	Second Wednesday in January	6012/	None
Wisconsin	33	4	100	2	Odd	Second Wednesday in January	None	None
Wyoming	27	4	56	2	0dd	Second Tuesday in January	40	None

Legislature meets on second Tues. in Jan. after election for purpose of organizing. No limit on sessions without pay.

5/Self-convened sessions limited to 30 days.

Members paid for only 50 days reg. ses., 30 days sp. ses.

7/A unicameral legislature.

8/Members paid for only 15 days.

9/Members paid for only 60 legis. days in calendar year.
10/Members paid for only 75 days reg. ses., 20 days sp. ses.
11/May be extended up to 30 days by 3/5 vote in each house.
12/Must be extended by governor until general appropriation passed.

Adapted from The Council of State Governments. The Book of the States, 1945-1946, and revised from The Book of the States, Supplement, 1947, and state constitutions.

<sup>3/</sup>Legislature meets in regular session in oddnumbered years; sessions held in even-numbered years designated budget sessions and commence on first Monday in March. 4/Split or bifurcated session.

State	A	ge	Sta		ence In	rict	U.S.	Other
50400	House	Senate	House	Senate	. House	Senate	Citizen	7
Alabama	21	25	3 yrs.	3 yrs.	1 yr.	l yr.	•••	
Arizona	25	25	3 yrs.	3 yrs.	l yr.	l yr.	Yes	The ability to read, write, speak and understand the English language sufficiently well to conduct the duties of the office without the aid of an interpreter.
Arkansas	21	21	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	1 yr.	1 yr.	Yes	
California -	••	••	3 yrs.	3 yrs.	l yr.	l yr.		
Colorado	25	25	l yr.*	1 yr.*	l yr.	l yr.	Yes	
Connecticut	21*	21*	l yr.*		6 mos.*		•••	, <del>-</del>
Delaware	24	27	3 yrs.	3 yrs.	1 yr.	l yr.		
Florida	21*	21*	l yr.	l yr.	6 mos.*	6 mos.*	Yes*	
Georgia	21	25	2 yrs.	4 yrs.	l yr.	l yr.	Yes	
Idaho	21*	21*	1 yr.*	l yr.*	l yr.	lyr.	Yes	
Illinois	21	25	5 yrs.	5 yrs.	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	Yes	
Indiana	21	25	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	l yr.	l yr.	Yes	
Iowa	21	25	l yr.	l yr.	60 days	60 days		*
Kansas	21*	21*	6 mos.*	6 mos.*	30 days*	30 days*		
Kentucky	24	30	2 yrs.	6 yrs.	l yr.	l yr.		,
Louisiana	21*	25	5 yrs.	5 yrs.	2 yrs.	2 yrs.		** .
Maine	21	25	1 yr.	l yr.	3 mos.	3 mos.	Yes	5 years U. S. citizen.
Maryland	21	25	3 yrs.	3 yrs.	l yr.	l yr.	•••	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,

State	A	ge	Sta		dence In	rict	u. s.	Other •
State		Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate	Citizen	Coner
Massachusetts	21.*	21*	1 yr.*	5 yrs.*	l yr.	5 yrs.	• • •	
Michigan	21*	21*	6 mos.*	6 mos.*	20 days*	20 days*	Yes	
Minnesota	21*	21*	l yr.	l yr.	6 mos.	6 mos.		•
Mississippi	21	25	4 yrs.	4 yrs.	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	•••	
Missouri	24	30	2 yrs.	3 yrs.	1 yr.	l yr.	•••	
Montana	21	24	l yr.	l yr.	l yr.	l yr.	Yes	. نىد
Nebraska	21*	21*	l yr.	l yr.	l yr.	1 yr.		
Nevada	21*	21*	6 mos.*	6 mos.*	30 days*	30 days*	Yes*	
New Hampshire	21*	30	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	Inhabi	tants	•••	,
New Jersey	21	30	2 yrs.	4 yrs.	1 yr.	l yr.	•••	Must have right of suffrage.
New Mexico	21	25	3 yrs.	3 yrs.	90 days <u>l</u> / 30 days <u>2</u> /		•••	
New York			5 yrs.	5 yrs.	l yr.	l yr.	Yes	<b>'</b>
North Carolina	21*	25	l yr.	2 yrs.	l yr.	1 yr.3/		
North Dakota	21	25	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	90 days <u>1</u> 30 days <u>2</u>	90 days <u>l</u> / 30 days	Yes*	•
Ohio	••		l yr.*	1 yr.*	1 yr.	l yr.		· •
Oklahoma	21.	25	1 yr.*	l yr.*	6 mos.1/ 30 days2/	6 mos.1/ 30 days2/	Yes*	, •
Oregon	21	21	l yr.*	1 yr.*	l yr.	l yr.	Yes	
Pennsylvania	21	25	4 yrs.	4 yrs.	l yr.	1 yr.		
Rhode Island	••	••.		•••	***		•••	No specification

State	A	ge	Sta		lence In	District		Other .
50200		Senate	Ноизе	Senate	House	Senate	Citizen	o unoi
South Carolina	21	25	2 <b>yrs.</b> *	2 yrs.*	1 yr.1/ 4 mos.2/	1 yr.1/ 4 mos.2/	Yes*	·
South Dakota	25	25	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	90 days <u>1</u> / 30 days <u>2</u> /	90 days <u>1</u> / 30 days <u>2</u> /	Yes	·
Tennessee	21	30	3 yrs.	3 yrs.	l yr.	l yr.	Yes	
Texas	21	26	2 yrs.	5 yrs.	l yr.	l yr.	Yes	
Utah	25	25	3 yrs.	3 yrs.	l yr.	l yr.	Yes	
Vermont	• • • · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	30	2 yrs.	•••	l yr.	•••	•••	For House of Representatives, persons most noted for wisdom and virtue.
Virginia	21*	21*	l yr.*	1 yr.*	6 mos. <u>1</u> / 30 days2/	6 mos. <u>l</u> / 30 days <u>2</u> /	Yes*	
Washington	21*	21*	l yr.*	l yr.*	90 daya <u>l</u> / 30 days <u>2</u> /	90 days1/ 30 days2/	Yes	Read and speak English.
West Virginia	21,*	25	1 yr.	5 yrs.	60 days*	60 days*	•••	
Wisconsin	21*	21*	l yr.	1 yr.	30 days*	30 days*	Yes*	
Wyoming	21	25	l yr.*	1 yr.*	l yr.	l yr.	Yes	•

<sup>\*</sup>Implied in qualification of citizenship or elector.

Adapted from Louisiana State Law Institute. Central Research Staff Constitution Revision Projet. "The Legislature." March, 1947. (Bulletin No. 10) pp. 21-22, and revised from state constitutions.

<sup>1/</sup> County

<sup>2/</sup> Precinct

<sup>3/</sup> Usually 1 yr.

# SALARIES AND COMPENSATION OF STATE LEGISLATORS

		aries	Salary	Compensation
State	Regular Session	Special Session	Fixed by	Allowance for Transportation
Alabama Arizona Arkansas California Colorado Connecticut	\$8-day, 60 days	\$10 per day, 36 days \$8-day, 20-day limit \$6-day, 15-day limit 2/ 3/	Constitution Constitution Statute	5¢ a milel/ Actual traveling expense, one round trip
Delaware Florida Georgia Idaho Illinois Indiana	\$6-day, 60 days	\$10-day, 30-day limit \$6 per day, 20 days \$10 per day \$10-day, 20-day limit	Constitution Constitution Constitution	10¢ a mile4/ 10¢ a mile, one round trip 10¢-milė, one regular and one round trip 10¢ a mile, one round trip 10¢ a mile 20¢ a mile, one round trip
Iowa Kansas Kentucky Louisiana Maine Maryland	\$3 per day2/ \$5-day, 60 days \$20 per day	Not over \$10 per day \$3 per day2/ \$5 per day \$20 per day \$10 per day	Constitution and Statute Statute Statute	5¢ a mile 15¢ a mile, one round trip 15¢ a mile, one round trip 10¢ a mile <sup>6</sup> / \$2 for 10 miles, once each session 20¢ a mile <sup>7</sup> /
Massachusetts Michigan Minnesota Mississippi Missouri Montana	\$1,500-session \$125-mo., 60 days	Determined at session \$10 per day \$14 per day \$125 per month \$10 per day	Constitution Statute Statute	8/ 10¢ a mile, one round trip10/ 15¢ a mile, limit \$350 10¢ a mile, one round trip \$1-10 miles, round trip once each session 7¢ a mile
Nebraska Nevada	\$1,744.18, 2 yrs. \$15 per day <u>ll</u>	None \$15 per day	Constitution Statute	Actual traveling expense, one round trip 10¢ a mile

# SALARIES AND COMPENSATION OF STATE LEGISLATORS (Cont.)

	Sal	aries	Salary	Compensation .
State	Regular Session	Special Session	Fixed by	Allowance for Transportation
New Hampshire	\$200 per term	\$3-day, 15-day limit	Constitution and Statute	5¢ a mile, each day of attendance
New Jersey New Mexico New York	\$2,000 per year \$10 per day \$2,500 per year	None \$10 per day	Constitution	Transportation by state railroad pass 10¢ a mile Actual traveling expense, round trip once a week
North Dakota Ohio Oklahoma Oregon		\$8-day, 20-day limit \$5 per day None \$6 per day 12/ \$8-day, 20-day limit \$500 per session 13/	Statute Constitution Constitution	10¢ a mile, one round trip Mileage once a week 10¢ a mile, one round trip
South Dakota	\$1,050-session	None \$25 per day \$10 per day	Constitution and Statute	$5\phi$ a mile, round trip once a week $5\phi$ a mile, one round trip
Tennessee Texas Utah	\$4-day, 75 days \$10 per day <u>15</u> / \$300 per year	\$4 per day, 20 days \$10-day, 30-day limit Included in annual salary	Constitution Constitution Constitution	\$2.50 for 25 miles
Vermont Virginia Washington West Virginia Wisconsin Wyoming	\$720 per session \$5-day, 60 days \$500 per year \$2,400, 2 years	\$6 per day \$360 per session \$5 per day, 60 days None None \$12 per day	Constitution Statute Statute	$20\phi$ a mile $16/$ $10\phi$ a mile $17/$ $10\phi$ a mile, one round trip $18/$ $10\phi$ a mile $10\phi$ a mile $10\phi$ mile, one round trip, $3\phi$ mile weekly $19/$ Mileage

Footnotes on next page.

- 1/\$10 a day living expenses.
- 2/ Regular session years: \$10 per session day plus balance to \$1,200; non-session years: \$100 monthly.
- 3/ Legislators receive as compensation \$1,000 for each biennial period, payable at the rate of \$7 per day during both regular and special sessions; the remainder, if any, is payable on first day of last month of each biennial period.
- 4/ \$25 for supplies regular session, \$10 special session.
- 5/ Not to exceed \$150 for regular or \$90 for special session.
- 6/ Two round trips allowed for regular session, one round trip for special session.
- 7/ In terms of fixed amounts for each member.
- 8/ Not over 50 miles:  $22\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ a mile each way, each week (but not less than \$4.50 a week). Over 50 miles:  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ a mile each way, each week and \$20 hotel and living expenses or extra travel, weekly. \$10 basic allowance for general expenses for each week of regular annual session.
- 9/ For elected term.
- 10/\$7.50 a day for living expenses.
- 11/Not to exceed \$900 at any session.
- 12/ \$2 per day after 60 days.
- 13/ \$750 if session lasts over one month.
- 14/\$1,200 a year expense account.
- 15/\$5 a day after 120 days.
- 16/ Regular session; 10¢ a mile special session.
- 17/ Distance computed by nearest mail route.
- $\overline{18}$ / \$10 a day maintenance, regular and special session.
- 19/ \$5 per day expense allowance per session.
- Adapted from The Council of State Governments, Report of the Committee on Legislative Processes and Procedures: "Our State Legislatures." Chicago, 1946, p. 21, and revised from state constitutions and statutes.

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