

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1276

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
State Government

**Title:** An act relating to the citizens' alliance for government accountability.

**Brief Description:** Establishing the citizens' alliance for government accountability.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Miloscia, McMorris, Haigh, Romero, D. Schmidt, Lambert, Anderson, Conway, Kenney, Kessler, Simpson, Ogden, Lovick, Morris, McIntire, Ruderman, O'Brien, Edwards and Kagi.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

State Government: 2/21/01, 2/26/01 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Creates the Citizens' Alliance for Government Accountability to make recommendations on increasing and improving state government efficiency, effectiveness, organization, operations, and accountability and to achieve cost savings.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives McMorris, Republican Co-Chair; Romero, Democratic Co-Chair; Miloscia, Democratic Vice Chair; Schindler, Republican Vice Chair; Haigh, Lambert, McDermott and D. Schmidt.

**Staff:** Steve Lundin (786-7127).

**Background:**

A number of programs have been instituted to improve government efficiency and accountability.

Legislation was enacted in 1996 establishing a performance based budgeting system for state agencies. Agencies are expected to: (a) establish mission statements and set goals;

(b) develop strategies to achieve goals; (c) set outcome based objectives; (d) provide continuous self assessment of each program; (e) link budget proposals with their mission statements and goals; and (f) objectively determine the success in achieving goals.

The Governor issued Executive Order 97-03 in 1997 requiring all state agencies to develop and implement programs to improve the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of public services they provide using quality improvement, business process redesign, employee involvement, and other quality improvement techniques.

The Governor issued Executive Order 97-02 in 1997 establishing a rules review process for state agencies to periodically review their rules to determine if the rules should be retained, modified, or repealed.

The Productivity Board was established to administer the employee suggestion program and the teamwork incentive program. State agencies are authorized to make employee recognition awards.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee conducts performance audits. The State Auditor conducts performance audits if the legislature appropriates moneys for specific performance audits in the state budget.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The Citizens' Alliance for Government Accountability is established to make reports and recommendations to increase and improve state government efficiency, effectiveness, organization, operations, and accountability and to achieve cost savings.

The alliance is a panel composed of six members as follows: (a) the Governor, or the governor's designee; (b) the State Auditor, or auditor's designee; and (c) four citizen members, one of whom is appointed by the leader of each of the two major party caucuses in each house. One of the citizen members is chosen as the chair of the alliance. Members do not receive compensation, but have their travel expenses reimbursed.

The alliance may appoint task forces as needed reflecting the state's economic, social, ethnic, and political diversity, including private sector, for-profit, corporate chief executive officers, state employees, labor organization representatives, management experts, local government managers and administrators, and the general citizenry. Volunteers shall be sought to participate.

The alliance presents the Governor and Legislature with a strategic work plan by December 31, 2001, to accomplish its purposes and make annual reports to the Governor and Legislature.

The Citizens' Alliance for Government Accountability account is created in the custody of the state treasurer to finance the activities of the alliance. Expenditures must be authorized by the director of the Office of Financial Management. Moneys in the account are not subject to appropriation or allotment procedures. Two hundred thousand dollars is appropriated for the biennium ending June 30, 2003, from the state general fund to this account. The alliance may solicit charitable gifts, grants, and donations that are placed into this account and used to offset general fund moneys appropriated for these purposes.

The alliance is placed under the sunset review process and terminates on June 30, 2008.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

Directs the citizens' alliance to assess the effectiveness of collaboration between the three branches of state government. Directs the citizens' alliance to make recommendations for organizational improvements to simplify the structure of state government, reduce the number of state agencies, provide better service delivery, increase employee productivity, reduce costs, achieve better decision-making, and enhance coordination.

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**Appropriation:** Two hundred thousand dollars is appropriated for the biennium ending June 30, 2003.

**Fiscal Note:** Not Requested.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For:** This bill was passed out of committee unanimously last year. There is a need for citizens to be more directly involved in government. This increases trust and confidence in government. This is a tool for more responsiveness and effectiveness. This creates a blue ribbon committee, but this isn't enough. Piggyback this concept onto a system of small groups of citizens (eight to 12) meeting to provide their input. This is the first step in achieving accountability.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Miloscia, prime sponsor; Brian Sontag, State Auditor; Bob Mitchell, Washington Association of Realtors; Dick Spady, Forum Foundation; Bev Hermanson, Washington Federation of State Employees; Tonia Sorrell-Neal, Business Industry Association of Washington; and Jay Roach, citizen.