

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1391

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
State & Local Government, March 28, 2001

Title: An act relating to statutory committees of the legislature.

Brief Description: Overseeing statutory legislative committees.

Sponsors: By House Committee on State Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Kessler (co-prime sponsor) and Mastin (co-prime sponsor)).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 3/21/01, 3/28/01 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Gardner, Hale, Haugen, Horn, Kline, McCaslin, Roach and T. Sheldon.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: The Legislature has created a number of legislative agencies to help it carry out its duties. Some of these agencies are: (a) the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee; (b) the Joint Committee on Pension Policy; (c) the Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee; (d) the Joint Legislative Systems Committee; and (e) the Legislative Transportation Committee.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC). Formerly known as the Legislative Budget Committee, JLARC has many duties including conducting performance audits of state agencies and programs, conducting sunset reviews, and providing assistance to legislative committees. The committee consists of eight representatives and eight senators who appoint a legislative auditor to assist them in their statutory duties. The committee also has a four-member executive committee. The executive committee and the legislative auditor are responsible for the administrative functions of the committee, including hiring staff and setting their salaries.

The Joint Committee on Pension Policy (JCPP). JCPP studies pension issues, develops pension policies, studies pension funding, and makes recommendations to the Legislature. The committee consists of eight representatives and eight senators. JCPP appoints the State Actuary whose duties include performing actuarial services for the Department of Retirement Systems, advising the Legislature and the Governor on pension issues, and preparing actuarial fiscal notes on pension bills. The actuary is responsible for hiring staff and, with the approval of the JCPP, setting their salaries.

The Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee (LEAP). LEAP provides the Legislature with analysis and monitoring of state agency expenditures, budgets, and related fiscal matters. The committee consists of four representatives and four senators. The committee has administrative responsibilities including entering into contracts, and hiring permanent and temporary staff.

The Joint Legislative Systems Committee (JLSC). JLSC adopts policies, procedures, and standards regarding the information processing and communications technology of the Legislature. The committee consists of two representatives and two senators. JLSC appoints a legislative systems coordinator who is responsible for the administration of the committee. The committee also has the power to enter into contracts and hire staff.

The Legislative Transportation Committee (LTC). LTC is authorized to make studies related to bills assigned to the House and Senate Transportation Committees and other such studies as provided by law. The committee may review and approve franchise agreements entered into by the Department of Transportation. In addition, LTC may study and analyze all available facts and matters pertaining to the financial condition of the motor vehicle fund.

Summary of Amended Bill: In order to facilitate operational adequacy among legislative agencies, JLARC, JCPP, LEAP, JLSC and LTC are subject to operational policies, procedures, and oversight as deemed necessary by the House Executive Rules Committee, and the Senate Facilities and Operations Committee. The operational policies, procedures, and oversight include the development process of biennial budgets, contracting procedures, personnel policies and compensation plans, selection of a chief administrator, facilities, and expenditures.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The striking amendment emphasizes the adequacy of various processes. LTC is added to the bill.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Leadership is looking for more consistency in the operations of our statutory committees.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Kessler, prime sponsor.