

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5417

As of February 11, 2003

Title: An act relating to performance audits.

Brief Description: Requiring an independent audit of state government.

Sponsors: Senators Reardon, Kastama, Schmidt, Eide, Esser, Benton and Shin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/12/03.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Staff: Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

Background: The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) has the power to conduct performance audits of state agency programs in accordance with a work plan adopted by the committee. The State Auditor has the power to conduct performance audits if the Legislature appropriates moneys for specific performance audits in the state budget or at the direction of JLARC.

Summary of Bill: The State Auditor is instructed to contract for a performance audit of the executive branch of state government to be completed by June 30, 2004. The audit includes an examination of the efficiency and effectiveness of major policies, practices, and functions of executive agencies. The audit is conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards and includes evaluation of planning, budgeting, and program evaluation policies; personnel systems operations and management; state purchasing operations; information processing and telecommunications systems policy; and organizational and staffing patterns. State agencies are instructed to provide the audit staff with any requested information in a timely manner and at no cost. The State Auditor must report the results of the audit to the Legislature by September 1, 2004, and the report must include identification of and recommendations for best practices. State agencies have 90 days to respond to the Legislature regarding the audit, and identify actions planned to implement audit findings and recommendations.

A joint committee on government accountability is created by the Legislature. The committee includes the chairs and ranking members of the House State Government and Appropriations committees, and the Senate Government Operations and Ways and Means committees. Senate Committee Services and the Office of Program Research staff the committee. The committee must hold four public hearings in different areas of the state to receive public input regarding the audit and develop legislation based on audit findings and recommendations.

The State Auditor is authorized to conduct performance audits independently or as authorized by the Legislature or the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee.

Appropriation: \$5,000,000.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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