
HOUSE BILL 2519

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2006 Regular Session

By Representatives Nixon, Roberts and Talcott

Read first time 01/10/2006. Referred to Committee on State Government Operations & Accountability.

1 AN ACT Relating to expanding the continuity of government act;
2 amending RCW 42.14.010, 42.14.030, and 42.14.035; creating a new
3 section; and providing an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 42.14.010 and 1963 c 203 s 2 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 Unless otherwise clearly required by the context, the (~~following~~)
8 definitions (~~apply~~) in this section apply throughout this chapter.

9 (1) "Unavailable" means either that a vacancy in the office exists
10 or that the lawful incumbent of the office is absent or unable to
11 exercise the powers and discharge the duties of the office following an
12 attack and a declaration of existing emergency by the governor or his
13 successor.

14 (2) "Attack" means any acts of warfare taken by an enemy of the
15 United States causing substantial damage or injury to persons or
16 property in the United States and in the state of Washington.

17 (3) "Extraordinary disaster" means an event or series of events
18 that occur in or affect the state of Washington, of a scale that
19 disrupts the ability of the legislature to assemble at its usual

1 meeting place due to destruction, significant damage, or quarantine,
2 and may include earthquake, volcanic eruption, meteor or comet strike,
3 tsunami, pandemic disease, or other catastrophic events if any such
4 disaster rises to the level of an extraordinary disaster.

5 **Sec. 2.** RCW 42.14.030 and 1963 c 203 s 4 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 In the event enemy attack or an extraordinary disaster reduces the
8 number of legislators available for duty, then those legislators
9 available for duty shall constitute the legislature and shall have full
10 power to act in separate or joint assembly by majority vote of those
11 present. In the event of an attack or an extraordinary disaster, (1)
12 quorum requirements for the legislature shall be suspended, and (2)
13 where the affirmative vote of a specified proportion of members for
14 approval of a bill, resolution or other action would otherwise be
15 required, the same proportion of those voting thereon shall be
16 sufficient. In the event of an attack or an extraordinary disaster,
17 the governor shall call the legislature into session as soon as
18 practicable, and in any case within thirty days following the inception
19 of the attack or extraordinary disaster. If the governor fails to
20 issue such call, the legislature shall, on the thirtieth day from the
21 date of inception of the attack or extraordinary disaster,
22 automatically convene at the place where the governor then has his or
23 her office. Each legislator shall proceed to the place of session as
24 expeditiously as practicable. At such session or at any session in
25 operation at the inception of the attack or extraordinary disaster, and
26 at any subsequent sessions, limitations on the length of session and on
27 the subjects which may be acted upon shall be suspended.

28 **Sec. 3.** RCW 42.14.035 and 1969 ex.s. c 106 s 1 are each amended to
29 read as follows:

30 Whenever, in the judgment of the governor, it becomes
31 impracticable, due to an emergency resulting from enemy attack or
32 (~~(natural)~~) extraordinary disaster, to convene the legislature in the
33 usual seat of government at Olympia, the governor may call the
34 legislature into emergency session in any location within this or an
35 adjoining state. If it is or becomes impracticable or unsafe for
36 members of the legislature to convene in person, the governor may

1 authorize the legislature to convene by teleconference or any other
2 reasonable means. The first order of business of any legislature so
3 convened shall be the establishment of temporary emergency seats of
4 government for the state. After any emergency relocation, the affairs
5 of state government shall be lawfully conducted at such emergency
6 temporary location or locations for the duration of the emergency.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1)(a) A legislative task force is
8 established to study and prepare recommendations related to the
9 legislature's ability to convene by teleconference or other means in
10 the event of an attack or extraordinary disaster, with members as
11 provided for as follows:

12 (i) The four members of the joint legislative systems committee, as
13 provided for in RCW 44.68.020;

14 (ii) The legislative systems coordinator, as provided for in RCW
15 44.68.040;

16 (iii) The director of senate committee services;

17 (iv) The director of the house of representatives office of program
18 research;

19 (v) The director of the emergency management division of the
20 military department, or the director's designee;

21 (vi) The chief of the state patrol, or the chief's designee;

22 (vii) The secretary of health, or the secretary's designee; and

23 (viii) A representative of the department of general
24 administration.

25 (b) The task force shall choose its chair from among its
26 legislative membership. The presiding officer of the joint legislative
27 systems committee shall convene the initial meeting of the task force.

28 (2) The task force shall review the following issues:

29 (a) The technology and facilities available or needed to convene
30 the legislature by teleconference or other means if the legislature is
31 unable to meet in its usual place;

32 (b) The need for statutory changes in order to facilitate a
33 continuity of government plan for the legislature;

34 (c) The need for changes to senate or house of representatives
35 rules in order to facilitate a continuity of government plan for the
36 legislature; and

1 (d) The need for capital investments in order to implement a
2 continuity of government plan for the legislature.

3 (3) Staff support for the task force shall be provided by senate
4 committee services, the house of representatives office of program
5 research, and the legislative service center.

6 (4) Legislative members of the task force shall be reimbursed for
7 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative
8 members, except those representing an employer or organization, are
9 entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW
10 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

11 (5) The expenses of the task force shall be paid jointly by the
12 senate and the house of representatives. Task force expenditures are
13 subject to approval by the senate facilities and operations committee
14 and the house of representatives executive rules committee, or the
15 successor committees.

16 (6) The task force, where appropriate, may consult with individuals
17 from the public and private sector or ask such individuals to establish
18 an advisory committee. Members of such an advisory committee are not
19 entitled to reimbursement of expenses.

20 (7) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations to
21 the senate facilities and operations committee, the house of
22 representatives executive rules committee, and other appropriate
23 committees of the legislature by October 1, 2006.

24 (8) This section expires January 1, 2007.

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