

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5435

C 198 L 07
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating the public records exemptions accountability committee.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Kauffman, Pflug, Swecker and Keiser; by request of Attorney General).

Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections
House Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs

Background: In 1972, Washington voters approved the Public Disclosure Act (Act) by initiative. At the time of approval, the Act contained ten exemptions from disclosure. As of 2006, there are approximately 300 exemptions.

Currently, there is no formal review process for exemptions once they are passed into law.

Summary: The Public Records Exemption Accountability Committee (Committee) is created. The 13-member Committee is charged with reviewing all exemptions from public disclosure.

Members must include two representatives appointed by the Governor, two appointed by the Attorney General, four members of the public, and four members of the Legislature. Terms of the members must be four years and must be staggered beginning August 1, 2007. The Committee must meet no later than September 1, 2007, and each quarter following, to discuss the exemptions and recommend the repeal or amendment of any exemption.

By August 1, 2007, and each year following, the code reviser must provide the Committee with a list of all exemptions from public disclosure.

The purpose of the Committee is to review public disclosure exemptions and provide recommendations. The Committee must develop and publish criteria for review of public exemptions.

The Committee must develop a schedule to accomplish a review of each public disclosure exemption. The Committee must publish the schedule and publish any revisions made to the schedule.

For each public disclosure exemption, the Committee must provide a recommendation as to whether the exemption should be continued without modification, modified, scheduled for sunset review at a future date, or terminated. By November 15 of each year, the Committee must transmit its recommendations to the Governor, the Attorney General, and the appropriate committees of the Legislature.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 48 0

House	92	1	(House amended)
Senate	47	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 22, 2007