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**State Government & Tribal Affairs  
Committee**

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**SSB 6367**

**Brief Description:** Allowing agencies to direct requesters to their web site for public records.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Hatfield, Regala, Fairley, Fraser, Kohl-Welles and Roach).

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Allows public agencies to respond to a public records request by providing an Internet address for the location of the requested records.

**Hearing Date:** 2/23/10

**Staff:** Pam Madson (786-7111).

**Background:**

The Public Records Act (PRA) requires that all state and local government agencies make all public records available for public inspection and copying unless they fall within certain statutory exemptions. The provisions requiring public records disclosure must be interpreted liberally and the exemptions narrowly in order to effectuate a general policy favoring disclosure.

State law encourages agencies to plan for and implement processes for making information available electronically to ease the access to public records.

An agency, the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, or the Office of the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives are required to respond to a public records request within five business days of its receipt by the public agency. The agency must either provide the record, acknowledge that the request has been received and provide a reasonable time estimate for a response, or deny the request.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Summary of Bill:**

An additional response option is provided for use by public agencies that receive a public records request. The agency may provide a link to the specific record on the Internet for the requestor to access the records requested. If the requestor lets the agency know that he or she cannot access the records through the Internet, the agency must provide copies or allow the requestor to view the documents through an agency computer.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.