
SENATE BILL 5186

State of Washington 61st Legislature 2009 Regular Session

By Senators Stevens, Schoesler, Swecker, Hewitt, Pflug, and Holmquist

Read first time 01/15/09. Referred to Committee on Government Operations & Elections.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing a period of public and legislative
2 review of appropriations legislation; adding new sections to chapter
3 44.04 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 44.04 RCW
6 to read as follows:

7 The legislature finds that approval of the state budget is among
8 the most important acts of the legislature in any year, and that the
9 public is entitled to a reasonable opportunity to learn how public
10 funds are proposed to be expended before bills making appropriations
11 become law. The legislature further finds that public notice,
12 dissemination of information, and informed analysis of proposed budgets
13 is an essential requisite of transparent, accountable government.

14 Omnibus appropriations bills frequently have been acted on by the
15 legislature in a manner that has afforded little opportunity for public
16 review and information about proposed expenditures, or for members of
17 the legislature to deliberate upon proposed appropriations in an
18 informed and conscientious manner. The legislature finds this practice
19 has weakened the performance of the legislature in its stewardship of

1 public funds, and reduced public trust in government. The legislature
2 finds that many other states, in their constitutions, statutes, or
3 legislative rules, require an opportunity for public and legislative
4 review of budget legislation.

5 The legislature therefore finds it in the public interest to
6 provide for an appropriate period of public and legislative review of
7 all omnibus appropriations bills before they are acted on by the
8 legislature and submitted to the governor for approval.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 44.04 RCW
10 to read as follows:

11 An omnibus operating, capital, or transportation appropriations
12 bill, or proposed substitute, striking amendment, or conference
13 committee report thereon, must be made publicly available to the
14 members of the legislature and the public at least three calendar days
15 before such a bill may be voted on by the senate or the house of
16 representatives.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act may be known and cited as the
18 budget sunshine act.

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