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## Appropriations Committee

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### HB 1940

**Brief Description:** Creating the office of the forecast council.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hudgins, Hunter and Carlyle.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Office of the Forecast Council.
- Abolishes the Economic and Revenue Forecast Council and transfers its powers, duties, and functions to the Office of the Forecast Council.
- Abolishes the Caseload Forecast Council and transfers its powers, duties, and functions to the Office of the Forecast Council.

**Hearing Date:** 2/28/13

**Staff:** Danielle Cruver (786-7157).

#### **Background:**

##### Economic and Revenue Forecast Council:

The Economic and Revenue Forecast Council (ERFC) is an independent council of seven members established to prepare and approve the official state economic and revenue forecasts. The ERFC consists of two members appointed by the Governor, four members from the Legislature, and the State Treasurer. One legislative member is appointed by the chair of each of the two largest political caucuses in the Senate and House of Representatives. The chair of the council is selected from among the four caucus appointees.

The ERFC is authorized to employ a forecast supervisor to oversee the preparation of all official economic and revenue forecasts.

Four times each year the supervisor must prepare an official state economic and revenue forecast, an unofficial state economic and revenue forecast based on optimistic economic and revenue

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projections, and an unofficial state economic and revenue forecast based on pessimistic economic and revenue projections. The ERFC must approve the official forecast by an affirmative vote of at least four members. If the ERFC is unable to approve a forecast before a required date the supervisor will submit the forecast without approval and the forecast will have the same effect as if approved by the ERFC.

#### Caseload Forecast Council:

The Caseload Forecast Council (CFC) is an independent council of six members established to forecast the entitlement caseloads for the State of Washington. The CFC consists of two members appointed by the Governor, and four members from the Legislature. One legislative member is appointed by the chair of each of the two largest political caucuses in the Senate and House of Representatives. The chair of the council is selected from among the four caucus appointees. The CFC may select such other officers as the members deem necessary.

The CFC employs a caseload forecast supervisor to supervise the preparation of all caseload forecasts.

At least three times each year and on such dates as the CFC determines will facilitate the development of budget proposals by the governor and legislature, the supervisor submits caseload forecasts, with any unofficial forecasts, to the governor and the members of the legislative fiscal committees. The CFC prepares forecasts for the number of persons expected to meet entitlement requirements and require the services of public assistance programs, state correctional institutions, state correctional noninstitutional supervision, state institutions for juvenile offenders, the common school system, long-term care, medical assistance, foster care, and adoption support.

In 2011 the CFC assumed responsibility for the adult felony and juvenile disposition databases, the annual sentencing statistical summaries, and the sentencing manuals, formerly under the Sentencing Guidelines Commission. The CFC develops and maintains a computerized adult and juvenile sentencing information system consisting of offender, offense, history, and sentence information entered from the judgment and sentence forms for all adult felons.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

The Economic and Revenue Forecast Council is abolished and its powers, duties, and functions are transferred to the Office of the Forecast Council.

The Caseload Forecast Council is abolished and its powers, duties, and functions are transferred to the Office of the Forecast Council.

The Office of the Forecast Council (Council) is established to prepare and approve the official state economic and revenue forecasts and to forecast the entitlement caseloads for the State of Washington. The Council consists of seven members: two members appointed by the Governor; four members from the Legislature; and the State Treasurer. One legislative member is appointed by the chair of each of the two largest political caucuses in the Senate and House of Representatives. The chair of the Council is selected from among the four caucus appointees.

The Council is authorized to employ a Director, who supervises the preparation of all economic and revenue forecasts, the presentation of the state budget outlooks, and the preparation of all caseload forecasts.

Four times each year the Director must prepare the official state economic and revenue forecast, an unofficial state economic and revenue forecast based on optimistic economic and revenue projections, and an unofficial state economic and revenue forecast based on pessimistic economic and revenue projections.

At least three times each year and on such dates as the Council determines will facilitate the development of budget proposals by the governor and legislature, the Director must submit caseload forecasts, with any unofficial forecasts.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 2013.