
State Government Committee

ESSB 5267

Brief Description: Ordering development of processes to allow prerecorded video testimony and written testimony on pending legislation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations & Security (originally sponsored by Senators Habib, Roach, Liias, Pearson, Keiser, Mullet and Chase; by request of Secretary of State).

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defines prerecorded video testimony and written testimony as legislative records.• Requires the Legislature to allow the public to provide testimony through prerecorded videos and written statements. |
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Hearing Date: 3/24/15

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

The Washington State Constitution states that each house may establish its own proceedings. The House of Representatives and the Senate each adopt their own rules, and both houses have rules that allow for open public meetings at which the public is welcome to testify on proposed legislation.

The Joint Legislative Systems Committee.

The Joint Legislative Systems Committee (Systems Committee) oversees the information processing and communications systems of the Legislature. The Systems Committee includes members from each caucus of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Among other functions, the Systems Committee is directed to plan for making legislative information available electronically, including:

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- promoting and facilitating electronic access to the public of legislative information and services;
- considering electronic public access needs when planning new information systems or major upgrades of information systems;
- determining which legislative information the public most wants and needs;
- increasing capabilities to receive information electronically from the public, and transmit forms, applications and other communications and transactions electronically; and
- using technologies that allow continuous access and are easy to use, including for persons with disabilities.

Legislative Records.

All public records are state property that must be managed and protected by the state. Certain official public records must be preserved and may only be destroyed under certain circumstances. A legislative record is an official public record, which includes:

- correspondence, amendments, reports, and minutes of meetings made by or submitted to legislative committees; and
- transcripts, other records of hearings, supplementary written testimony, or data filed with committees to subcommittees in connection with the exercise of legislative or investigatory functions.

Legislative records do not include the records of an official act of the Legislature kept by the Secretary of State, published materials, materials routinely maintained in a public repository, or reports or correspondence under the personal control of a Legislative member.

Summary of Bill:

Prerecorded video testimony and written testimony are legislative records. The Systems Committee must develop processes for both mobile devices and computers to allow the public to provide testimony on pending legislation through prerecorded videos and written statements. The Systems Committee may set up parameters around the length of prerecorded videos and written statements and whether content is inappropriate and should not be made available to legislators unless requested by a legislator. Submitted testimony must be made available to members of the Legislature in a timely fashion.

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.