

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## ESSB 5504

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### As Reported by House Committee On: State Government & Tribal Relations

**Title:** An act relating to state agency employee access to peer-reviewed journals.

**Brief Description:** Concerning state agency employee and postsecondary student access to peer-reviewed journals.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Warnick, Sheldon, Hasegawa, Hunt, Zeiger, Takko, Wagoner, Hawkins, Honeyford, Carlyle, Keiser and Wilson, L.).

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

State Government & Tribal Relations: 2/25/20, 2/26/20 [DP].

#### **Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill**

- Directs the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to study the extent to which state employees or post-secondary students in other states have access to peer-reviewed journals.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL RELATIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Gregerson, Chair; Pellicciotti, Vice Chair; Walsh, Ranking Minority Member; Goehner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dolan, Hudgins, Mosbrucker and Smith.

**Staff:** Jason Zolle (786-7124).

#### **Background:**

In a number of scientific fields, academics and professionals rely on articles published in peer-reviewed journals for their research. Before publication in a peer-reviewed journal, articles must be reviewed by experts in the field. Reviewers may suggest revisions to an article before it is published, and an article will be rejected from publication if it is lacking in scholarly validity and rigor.

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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.*

Access to peer-reviewed journals often requires purchasing a subscription or paying an access fee, although specific articles may sometimes be purchased individually. College and university libraries generally subscribe to relevant journals for their students or others with library accounts. Several other states provide access to online journals for state agency employees or, through state or public libraries, all state residents.

The Legislature created the Washington State Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP) in 1983 to conduct nonpartisan research at the direction of the Legislature or its Board of Directors (Board). The Board is comprised of 16 members that represent the Legislature, the Executive Branch, and the academic community. The Board reviews and provides oversight for the WSIPP's projects. The WSIPP is housed in Olympia and receives fiscal and administrative services from The Evergreen State College.

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**Summary of Bill:**

The WSIPP is directed to study the extent to which state employees or post-secondary students in other states have access to peer-reviewed journals. The study must also consider funding, organizational structures, and policy mechanisms used in other states with such access. The study must be completed by December 1, 2021, and submitted to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over environmental or natural resource issues.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on February 17, 2020.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The State Board of Health does health impact reviews for state legislators, and it needs access to peer-reviewed articles to provide that service. The Department of Natural Resources also requires peer-reviewed articles for its work. To get the articles, the agencies have had to be creative, such as getting clinical faculty positions with a university or by sending staff members to a university with a list of articles to download for people in the office. This is neither efficient nor cost-effective. This bill will help identify mechanisms for how such access can be given to state employees. This bill is also important because providing access is expensive for libraries, so if there can be a consistent access point for everyone, it will provide better access and benefit all educational institutions.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Lindsay Herendeen, State Board of Health; Kirsten Feifel, Department of Natural Resources; Gareth Waugh, Port Blakely; and Carolyn Logue, Washington Library Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.