

---

**HOUSE BILL 2827**

---

**State of Washington**

**66th Legislature**

**2020 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives J. Johnson, Rude, Mead, Morgan, Hudgins, Ryu, Senn, Valdez, Frame, Volz, Pollet, and Macri

Read first time 01/24/20. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations.

1 AN ACT Relating to modernizing legislative operations; creating  
2 new sections; making appropriations; and providing an expiration  
3 date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature intends to modernize its  
6 operations in a manner that removes barriers and enhances  
7 accessibility, equity, inclusion, and diversity, and therefore  
8 results in a more representative government and robust democracy. The  
9 legislature seeks to continuously evaluate and improve the efficiency  
10 and effectiveness of all legislative operations. In addition, the  
11 legislature seeks to increase public participation; enact high  
12 quality legislation; recruit, retain, and invest in professional  
13 staff; and maintain the highest ethical standards. The legislature  
14 therefore establishes a joint select committee on the modernization  
15 of the Washington state legislature.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The joint select committee on the  
17 modernization of the Washington state legislature is established,  
18 with twelve voting members and sixteen nonvoting members as provided  
19 in this subsection.

1 (a) The senate majority leader shall appoint three voting members  
2 from the largest caucus of the senate, and the senate minority leader  
3 shall appoint three voting members from the next largest caucus of  
4 the senate. The appointed members must include:

5 (i) One member of the facilities and operations committee from  
6 each caucus;

7 (ii) One member of the ways and means committee from each caucus;  
8 and

9 (iii) One member of the state government, tribal relations and  
10 elections committee from each caucus.

11 (b) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint  
12 three voting members from the largest caucus of the house, and the  
13 house minority leader shall appoint three voting members from the  
14 next largest caucus of the house. The appointed members must include:

15 (i) One member of the executive rules committee from each caucus;

16 (ii) One member of the appropriations committee from each caucus;

17 and

18 (iii) One member of the state government and tribal relations  
19 committee from each caucus.

20 (c) The nonvoting members of the committee are:

21 (i) The secretary of the senate;

22 (ii) The chief clerk of the house of representatives;

23 (iii) The chiefs of staff from each of the two largest caucuses  
24 of the senate;

25 (iv) The chiefs of staff from each of the two largest caucuses of  
26 the house of representatives;

27 (v) The staff director for senate committee services;

28 (vi) The staff director for the house office of program research;

29 (vii) Two representatives of legislative assistants from each of  
30 the two largest caucuses of the senate, chosen by the committee  
31 cochair and vice cochair from their respective caucuses in the  
32 senate; and

33 (viii) Two representatives of legislative assistants from each of  
34 the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives, chosen by  
35 the committee cochair and vice cochair from their respective caucuses  
36 in the house of representatives.

37 (2) (a) The two cochairs of the committee are:

38 (i) One voting member chosen by the senate majority leader from  
39 his or her caucus; and

1 (ii) One voting member chosen by the speaker of the house of  
2 representatives from his or her caucus.

3 (b) The two vice cochaIRS of the committee are:

4 (i) One voting member chosen by the senate minority leader from  
5 his or her caucus; and

6 (ii) One voting member chosen by the house minority leader from  
7 his or her caucus.

8 (3) The directors of legislative agencies must cooperate with and  
9 provide information to the committee as the chairs may reasonably  
10 request.

11 (4) The committee must investigate, study, convene work sessions,  
12 seek public comment, make findings, and develop recommendations on  
13 modernizing the Washington state legislature.

14 (a) The work sessions must include reports to the committee on:

15 (i) Policies and other steps taken to prevent sexual harassment  
16 in the legislative environment; and

17 (ii) Policies and programs to provide opportunities for remote  
18 testimony during public hearings.

19 (b) The work sessions may also include reports from staff not  
20 formally represented on the committee, such as legal counsel for the  
21 senate and the house of representatives, and staff in accounting,  
22 cafeteria service, civic education, and security.

23 (c) The recommendations must address:

24 (i) Rules to promote a more modern and efficient Washington state  
25 legislature;

26 (ii) Legislative procedures, including the schedule and calendar;

27 (iii) Policies to develop the next generation of leaders;

28 (iv) Staff recruitment, diversity, retention, compensation, and  
29 benefits;

30 (v) The efficiency of administrative practices, including  
31 purchasing, travel, outside services, and shared administrative  
32 staff;

33 (vi) Technology and innovation; and

34 (vii) Other topics agreed upon by the cochaIRS and vice cochaIRS  
35 of the committee.

36 (5) The house of representatives and the senate shall enter into  
37 a confidentiality agreement with the department of enterprise  
38 services to provide staff support for the committee. Pursuant to the  
39 agreement, and if an appropriation is specifically provided for this  
40 purpose, the department may contract with additional persons who have

1 expertise in mediation or facilitation to carry out the mandates of  
2 this committee.

3 (6) Legislative members of the committee are reimbursed for  
4 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120.

5 (7) The expenses of the committee must be paid jointly by the  
6 house of representatives and the senate. Committee expenditures are  
7 subject to approval by the house of representatives executive rules  
8 committee and the senate facilities and operations committee.

9 (8) The committee shall provide quarterly status reports,  
10 including minutes of proceedings, reports of expenditures, and  
11 proposed plans for committee activities, to the house of  
12 representatives executive rules committee and the senate facilities  
13 and operations committee by September 30, 2020, December 31, 2020,  
14 and March 31, 2021. The committee shall submit a final report,  
15 including the results of studies, detailed findings, best practices,  
16 and any policy recommendations, to the house of representatives  
17 executive rules committee and the senate facilities and operations  
18 committee by June 30, 2021.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The sum of one hundred twenty-five  
20 thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is  
21 appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, from the  
22 general fund-state to the senate for the purposes of this act.

23 (2) The sum of one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars, or as  
24 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year  
25 ending June 30, 2021, from the general fund-state to the house of  
26 representatives for the purposes of this act.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act expires July 1, 2021.

--- END ---