
SENATE BILL 5267

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senators Habib, Roach, Liiias, Pearson, Keiser, Mullet, and Chase;
by request of Secretary of State

Read first time 01/16/15. Referred to Committee on Government
Operations & State Security.

1 AN ACT Relating to prerecorded video testimony and written
2 testimony on pending legislation; amending RCW 40.14.100; adding a
3 new section to chapter 44.68 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The Washington state legislature functions
6 in an open and public atmosphere. Committee meetings and floor
7 sessions are open to the public. One of the most important
8 opportunities to become involved in the debate over a bill is when it
9 is the subject of a hearing before a legislative committee. The
10 purpose of committee hearings is to gather information so that the
11 committee can make an informed recommendation on a given bill or
12 resolution. However, providing testimony during a committee hearing
13 may sometimes be challenging for the public. Traveling to Olympia to
14 testify in bad weather and during the work day may prove difficult
15 for some members of the public. Additionally, it may be a hardship
16 for the elderly or persons with disabilities to travel to Olympia to
17 testify in person. It is the intent of the legislature to establish
18 processes to allow the public to provide testimony on pending
19 legislation through prerecorded videos and written statements in an
20 effort to provide additional access to the legislative process and
21 opportunities for the public to provide testimony on legislation.

1 Moreover, it is the intent of the legislature that whenever possible
2 the prerecorded videos and written statements will be made available
3 to members of the legislature prior to legislative action on
4 legislation.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 44.68
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 The legislature and legislative agencies through the joint
8 legislative systems committee shall develop processes to allow the
9 public to provide testimony on pending legislation through
10 prerecorded videos and written statements. The systems committee may
11 set up parameters around the length of prerecorded videos and written
12 statements that may be submitted to the legislature through these
13 processes. Submitted testimony on pending legislation through
14 prerecorded videos and written statements must be made available to
15 members of the legislature in a timely fashion. The systems committee
16 may contract with a nonprofit organization that produces gavel-to-
17 gavel television coverage of state government deliberations and other
18 events of statewide significance in order to develop these processes.

19 **Sec. 3.** RCW 40.14.100 and 1971 ex.s. c 102 s 2 are each amended
20 to read as follows:

21 As used in RCW 40.14.010 and 40.14.100 through 40.14.180, unless
22 the context requires otherwise, "legislative records" shall be
23 defined as correspondence, prerecorded video testimony, written
24 testimony, amendments, reports, and minutes of meetings made by or
25 submitted to legislative committees or subcommittees and transcripts
26 or other records of hearings or supplementary written testimony or
27 data thereof filed with committees or subcommittees in connection
28 with the exercise of legislative or investigatory functions, but does
29 not include the records of an official act of the legislature kept by
30 the secretary of state, bills and their copies, published materials,
31 digests, or multi-copied matter which are routinely retained and
32 otherwise available at the state library or in a public repository,
33 or reports or correspondence made or received by or in any way under
34 the personal control of the individual members of the legislature.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act may be known and cited as the
2 "accessible legislative testimony act."

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