
**State Government, Elections &
Information Technology Committee**

HB 1948

Brief Description: Concerning open meetings of subgroups of a public agency governing body.

Sponsors: Representatives Harmsworth, Hudgins, Van Werven, Pollet and Taylor.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires specified subgroups of public agency governing bodies to post public notice of and conduct open meetings regarding policy and fiscal decisions.

Hearing Date: 2/15/17

Staff: Megan Palchak (786-7105).

Background:

Under the Open Public Meetings Act, all meetings of a public agency must be open to the public, with some exceptions articulated under the act.

Public agencies include:

- any state board, commission, committee, department, educational institution, or other state agency created by or pursuant to statute, other than courts and the Legislature;
- any county, city, school district, special purpose district, or other municipal corporation or political subdivision of the state of Washington;
- any subagency of a public agency which is created by or pursuant to statute, ordinance, or other legislative act, including but not limited to planning commissions, library or park boards, commissions, and agencies;
- any policy group whose membership includes representatives of publicly owned utilities formed by or pursuant to the laws of this state when meeting together as or on behalf of participants who have contracted for the output of generating plants being planned or built by an operating agency.

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.

Governing bodies include multimember boards, commissions, committees, councils, or other policy or rule-making bodies of a public agency, or any committee thereof when the committee acts on behalf of the governing body, conducts hearings, or takes testimony or public comment.

Summary of Bill:

Subcommittees, task forces, advisory groups, and other work groups created by an action of governing bodies of public agencies are required to make meetings related to policy and fiscal decisions open to the public. Notice of such meetings must be provided online no later than twenty-four hours prior to the start of the meeting.

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.