
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 8412

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Senators Das, Sheldon, Kuderer, Wilson, C., Darneille, Lovelett, Saldaña, Nguyen, Hasegawa, Billig, Mullet, Takko, Keiser, Rolfes, Hunt, Salomon, Conway, Stanford, Frockt, Hobbs, Lias, Van De Wege, Randall, Carlyle, Holy, Braun, Hawkins, Dhingra, Pedersen, and Wellman

Read first time 02/17/20. Referred to Committee on State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections.

1 WHEREAS, It is the intent of the legislature to modernize its
2 operations in a manner that removes barriers and enhances
3 accessibility, equity, inclusion, and diversity, and therefore
4 results in a more representative government and robust democracy; and

5 WHEREAS, The legislature seeks to continuously evaluate and
6 improve the efficiency and effectiveness of all legislative
7 operations; and

8 WHEREAS, In addition, the legislature seeks to increase public
9 participation; enact high quality legislation; recruit, retain, and
10 invest in professional staff; and maintain the highest ethical
11 standards; and

12 WHEREAS, For these reasons, the legislature hereby establishes a
13 joint select committee on the modernization of the Washington state
14 legislature;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the Senate of the state of
16 Washington, the House of Representatives concurring, That:

17 (1) The joint select committee on the modernization of the
18 Washington state legislature is established, with twelve voting
19 members and seventeen nonvoting members as provided in this
20 subsection.

21 (a) The leaders of the two largest caucuses in the senate shall
22 each appoint three voting members from their respective caucuses. The
23 appointed members must include:

1 (i) One member of the facilities and operations committee from
2 each caucus;

3 (ii) One member of the ways and means committee from each caucus;
4 and

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

7 (b) The leaders of the two largest caucuses in the house of
8 representatives shall each appoint three voting members from their
9 respective caucuses. The appointed members must include:

10 (i) One member of the executive rules committee from each caucus;
11 (ii) One member of the appropriations committee from each caucus;
12 and

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

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

16 (i) A representative of the office of the lieutenant governor;
17 (ii) The secretary of the senate or the secretary's designee;
18 (iii) The chief clerk of the house of representatives or the
19 chief clerk's designee;

20 (iv) The chiefs of staff from each of the two largest caucuses of
21 the senate;

22 (v) The chiefs of staff from each of the two largest caucuses of
23 the house of representatives;

24 (vi) The staff director for senate committee services;

25 (vii) The staff director for the house office of program
26 research;

27 (viii) Two representatives of legislative assistants from each of
28 the two largest caucuses of the senate; and

29 (ix) Two representatives of legislative assistants from each of
30 the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives.

31 (2) The leaders of the largest caucuses in the senate and in the
32 house of representatives shall designate two of the voting members as
33 chairs of the committee, and the leaders of the second-largest
34 caucuses in the senate and in the house of representatives shall
35 designate two of the voting members as vice chairs of the committee.

36 (3) The directors of legislative agencies shall cooperate with
37 the committee and provide information to the committee as the chairs
38 may reasonably request. Human resources staff from the senate and
39 house of representatives shall be available to provide technical

1 assistance to the committee in developing best practices for
2 legislative modernization.

3 (4) The committee shall study, convene work sessions, seek public
4 comment, make findings, and develop recommendations on modernizing
5 the Washington state legislature.

6 (a) The work sessions must include reports to the committee on
7 policies and programs to provide opportunities for remote testimony
8 during public hearings. The work sessions may also include reports
9 from staff not formally represented on the committee, such as legal
10 counsel for the senate and the house of representatives, and staff in
11 accounting, cafeteria service, civic education, and security.

12 (b) The recommendations must address:

13 (i) Rules to promote a more modern and efficient Washington state
14 legislature;

15 (ii) Procedures, including the schedule and calendar;

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

17 (iv) Staff recruitment, diversity, retention, and compensation
18 and benefits;

19 (v) Administrative efficiencies, including purchasing, travel,
20 outside services, and shared administrative staff;

21 (vi) Technology and innovation;

22 (vii) Other topics agreed upon by the chairs and vice chairs of
23 the committee; and

24 (viii) The use of an equity tool.

25 (5) The house of representatives and the senate shall enter into
26 an agreement with the Washington state institute for public policy to
27 provide staff support for the committee. Pursuant to the agreement,
28 and if an appropriation is specifically provided for this purpose,
29 the department may contract with additional persons who have
30 expertise in mediation or facilitation to carry out the mandates of
31 this committee.

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

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

38 (8) The committee shall provide quarterly status reports,
39 including minutes of proceedings, reports of expenditures, and
40 proposed plans for committee activities, to the house of

1 representatives executive rules committee and the senate facilities
2 and operations committee by September 30, 2020, December 31, 2020,
3 and March 31, 2021. The committee shall submit a final report,
4 including the results of studies, detailed findings, best practices,
5 and any policy recommendations, to the house of representatives
6 executive rules committee and the senate facilities and operations
7 committee by June 30, 2021.

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