
Public Safety Committee

SJR 8211

Brief Description: Amending the state Constitution to provide governmental continuity during emergency periods resulting from a catastrophic incident.

Sponsors: Senators Takko, Zeiger, Pedersen, Conway, McCoy, Hunt, Hobbs, Frockt, Fain, Bailey, Angel, Warnick, Carlyle, Van De Wege, Keiser, Chase and Kuderer.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposes an amendment to Article II, section 42 of the Washington Constitution to authorize the Legislature to enact measures ensuring the continuity of government operations during an emergency caused by a catastrophic incident.

Hearing Date: 2/19/18

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

Under Article II, section 42 of the Washington State Constitution (Constitution), in order to insure continuity of state and local governmental operations in periods of emergency resulting from an enemy attack, the Legislature has the power and duty to enact legislation providing for prompt and temporary succession to public offices when the incumbents and their legal successors are unavailable for official duties. The Legislature must also enact other measures as necessary for insuring the continuity of governmental operations during these emergencies.

Legislation may depart from specified provisions of the Constitution during the emergency if conformance with those provisions would be impracticable or cause undue delay. Constitutional provisions to which adherence is not required during these periods include those concerning: the seat of government; membership and quorum of the Legislature, and passage of bills; vacancies in state and county offices; and state records.

Summary of Bill:

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.

An amendment is proposed to Article II, section 42 of the Constitution that authorizes the Legislature to enact legislation providing for succession to public offices and other measures as necessary in order to insure continuity of state and local governmental operations in periods of emergency resulting from a catastrophic incident, in addition to enemy attack.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.