

SENATE BILL REPORT

SCR 8412

As of March 3, 2020

Brief Description: Concerning modernization of legislative operations.

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

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections: 3/05/20.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Concurrent Resolution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishes a joint select committee on legislative modernization.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: The state Legislature is made up of two chambers, the Senate and House of Representatives. Washington has 49 legislative districts, each of which elects a Senator and two Representatives. Senators serve four-year terms and Representatives serve two-year terms. The Senate and House of Representatives meet in session each year to create new laws, change existing laws, and enact budgets for the state.

Sources of law for the operation of the Legislature are contained in a number of sources, including the following:

- the state Constitution;
- state statute;
- the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, if adopted; and
- individual rules of the Senate and House of Representatives.

Summary of Concurrent Resolution: A joint select committee on legislative modernization is established.

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.

Membership. The committee consists of twelve voting members and seventeen non-voting members. Each of the two largest caucuses in the Senate must appoint:

- a member of the Facilities and Operations Committee;
- a member of the State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections Committee; and
- a member of the Ways & Means Committee.

Each of the two largest caucuses in the House must appoint:

- a member of the Executive Rules Committee;
- a member of the State Government & Tribal Relations Committee; and
- a member of the Appropriations Committee.

The leaders of the largest caucus in each chamber must designate voting members to serve as co-chairs. The leaders of the second largest caucus in each chamber must designate voting members to serve as co-vice-chairs.

Nonvoting members of the committee are:

- a representative of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor;
- the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives or their designees;
- chiefs of staff from the two largest legislative caucuses in each chamber;
- staff directors of Senate Committee Services and the Office of Program Research; and
- two representatives of legislative assistants from each of the two largest legislative caucuses in each chamber.

Study and Reporting. The committee must make recommendations on modernizing the Washington Legislature and submit a final report to the House of Representatives Executive Rules Committee and Senate Facilities and Operations Committee by June 30, 2021. Quarterly status reports, including meeting minutes, expenditures made, and planned activities, must be submitted beginning September 30, 2020. The final report must include the results of studies, detailed findings, best practices, and any policy recommendations, specifically addressing:

- rules to promote a more modern and efficient Legislature;
- procedures, including scheduling and calendaring;
- policies for developing new leaders;
- staff recruitment, diversity, retention, and compensation;
- administrative efficiencies;
- technology and innovation; and
- the use of an equity tool.

Legislative agency heads must cooperate with the committee and provide information on request. Human resources staff must be available to provide technical assistance.

Staff Support and Expenses. The Washington Institute for Public Policy will provide staff support for the committee, and mediators or facilitators may be contracted. Expenses are paid jointly by both chambers.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: Yes.