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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6232**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** Senate State Government & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators J. Wilson and Padden)

AN ACT Relating to establishing a pilot common public records portal; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the consolidated technology services agency is directed to study and select a suitable state agency for a pilot common public records portal as described in section 2 of this act.

(2) In selecting a suitable agency for the pilot common public records portal, the consolidated technology services agency must consider the goals of the project as described in section 2(5) of this act.

(3) The study must commence by July 1, 2024.

(4) By December 1, 2024, the consolidated technology services agency must select and announce the suitable agency for the pilot common public records portal.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, a pilot common public records portal is established for the purpose of developing a model public records access system that will provide free and convenient access to commonly requested public records.

(2) The consolidated technology services agency must serve as the managing entity for the pilot program and establish, operate, and maintain the pilot common public records portal.

(3) The project agency must coordinate with the consolidated technology services agency to provide public records for purposes of the pilot program and help develop the portal as a central repository and access point for freely accessible public records managed by the project agency during the operation of the pilot program.

(4) The pilot common public records portal must be established by June 1, 2025, and operate for five years.

(5) The pilot common public records portal must:

(a) Proactively publish and provide access to commonly requested public records that are available to all members of the public and require little to no review and no redaction;

(b) Operate as a central repository and archive for the purpose of all freely available public records on behalf of the project agency;

(c) Provide direct access to instantly view and download commonly requested public records;

(d) Seek to make public access easier by allowing members of the public to search and review commonly requested public records by topic category and trending issue areas; and

(e) Refer members of the public to the conventional public records request process, if they are requesting access to records that are not freely available and that may require review and redaction.

(6) Any state agency, city, county, special purpose district, or other local agency may choose to opt into the pilot program, and the consolidated technology services agency must coordinate with the opt-in agency to provide the public records of the agency through the online portal.

(7) The pilot common public records portal must provide free access to all public records provided through the portal and no charge or fee may be assessed on any website user.

(8) By December 1, 2030, the joint legislative audit and review committee must review the pilot project, identify challenges and opportunities for expanding the project to additional public agencies, and provide a report with findings and recommendations on the performance of the pilot common public records portal to the appropriate committees of the senate and the house of representatives.

(9) The pilot common public records portal is subject to all provisions of chapter 42.56 RCW and nothing in this act affects the provisions of chapter 42.56 RCW.

(10) For purposes of this section, "project agency" means the agency selected by the consolidated technology services agency to take part in the pilot common public records portal as described in section 1 of this act.

(11) This section expires December 31, 2030.

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