
SENATE BILL 6085

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Senators Conway, King, Hunt, and Keiser

Read first time 01/09/24. Referred to Committee on Labor & Commerce.

1 AN ACT Relating to reestablishing the underground economy task
2 force; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The joint legislative task force on
5 the underground economy in the Washington state construction industry
6 is reestablished. For purposes of this section, "underground economy"
7 means contracting and construction activities in which payroll is
8 unreported or underreported with consequent nonpayment of payroll
9 taxes to federal and state agencies including nonpayment of workers'
10 compensation and unemployment compensation taxes.

11 (2) The purpose of the task force is to study the nature and
12 scope of the underground economy and to recommend what policy
13 changes, if any, are needed to address the underground economy,
14 including whether greater cohesion and transparency among state
15 agencies is needed. To assist the task force in achieving this goal
16 and to determine the extent of and projected costs to the state and
17 workers of the underground economy in the construction industry, the
18 task force may contract with the institute for public policy, or, if
19 the institute is unavailable, another entity with expertise capable
20 of providing such assistance.

21 (3) (a) The task force shall consist of the following members:

1 (i) A member from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate
2 appointed by the president of the senate;

3 (ii) A member from each of the two largest caucuses of the house
4 of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of
5 representatives;

6 (iii) Four members representing the construction business,
7 selected from nominations submitted by statewide construction
8 business organizations and appointed jointly by the president of the
9 senate and the speaker of the house of representatives;

10 (iv) Four members representing construction laborers, selected
11 from nominations submitted by statewide labor organizations and
12 appointed jointly by the president of the senate and the speaker of
13 the house of representatives; and

14 (v) One representative from the state attorney general's office.

15 (b) In addition, the employment security department, the
16 department of labor and industries, and the department of revenue
17 shall cooperate with the task force and shall each maintain a liaison
18 representative, who is a nonvoting member of the task force. The
19 departments shall cooperate with the task force and the institute for
20 public policy, or other entity as appropriate, and shall provide
21 information and data as the task force or the institute, or other
22 entity as appropriate, may reasonably request.

23 (c) The legislative members will choose its chair or cochairs
24 from among its legislative membership at the initial meeting. The
25 legislative staff will schedule the initial meeting of the task force
26 at a time and date agreed to by the legislative members.

27 (4) (a) The task force shall use legislative facilities and staff
28 support shall be provided by senate committee services and the house
29 of representatives office of program research. Within available
30 funding, the task force may hire additional staff with specific
31 technical expertise if such expertise is necessary to carry out the
32 mandates of this study.

33 (b) Legislative members of the task force shall be reimbursed for
34 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative
35 members, except those representing an employer or organization, are
36 entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW
37 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

38 (c) The expenses of the task force will be paid jointly by the
39 senate and house of representatives. Task force expenditures are
40 subject to approval by the senate facilities and operations committee

1 and the house of representatives executive rules committee, or their
2 successor committees.

3 (5) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations
4 to the legislature by October 31, 2025.

5 (6) This section expires December 31, 2026.

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