

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1259

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
State Government & Elections, March 17, 2023

Title: An act relating to updating the executive team of the office of the secretary of state by adding signing authority to the chief of staff position.

Brief Description: Updating the executive team of the office of the secretary of state by adding signing authority to the chief of staff position.

Sponsors: Representatives Abbarno, Stearns and Reeves; by request of Secretary of State.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/8/23, 96-0.

Committee Activity: State Government & Elections: 3/10/23, 3/17/23 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Codifies the Chief of Staff position within the Office of the Secretary of State.
- Adds signing authority to the executive team.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Valdez, Vice Chair; Wilson, J., Ranking Member; Dozier, Fortunato, Hasegawa and Kuderer.

Staff: Megan Tudor (786-7478)

Background: The Office of the Secretary of State was established in 1889 with the adoption of the Washington State Constitution. The Secretary of State (SOS) is an elected position with a four-year term and is the chief elections officer, chief corporations officer, and supervisor of the state archives. Key responsibilities of the SOS include supervising

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state and local elections, certifying the results of state primaries and general elections, producing and distributing the state voter pamphlet, and collecting and maintaining state historical records.

The SOS's executive office employs an Assistant Secretary of State and Deputy Secretary of State. These executive positions are authorized by the SOS to perform any act or duty relating to the Office of the Secretary of State, and the SOS is responsible for the acts of the Assistant Secretary of State and Deputy Secretary of State.

Summary of Bill: The Chief of Staff position within the Office of the Secretary of State is codified in statute. The Assistant Secretary of State, Deputy Secretary of State, and Chief of Staff are explicitly given signing authority on behalf of the SOS.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill codifies the Chief of Staff position within the Office of the Secretary of State. No new position is created, this bill only adds signing authority.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Peter Abbarno, Prime Sponsor; Brian Hatfield, Office of Secretary of State.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.