

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1219

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government & Tribal Relations

Title: An act relating to the interbranch advisory committee.

Brief Description: Concerning the interbranch advisory committee.

Sponsors: Representatives Taylor, Farivar and Simmons.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Relations: 1/22/25, 1/31/25 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Makes the Interbranch Advisory Committee permanent by removing the sunset date of January 1, 2026.
- Requires the Administrative Office of the Courts to provide staff support for the committee.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL RELATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Mena, Chair; Stearns, Vice Chair; Doglio and Farivar.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chase.

Staff: Desiree Omli (786-7105).

Background:

The Interbranch Advisory Committee (Committee) was created in 2022 to foster

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cooperation, communication, coordination, collaboration, and planning regarding issues of mutual concern among the three branches of state government, and to suggest ways to provide access to justice and to court services in a just and equitable manner.

Membership of the Committee includes:

- four legislative members: one from each of the two largest caucuses of the House of Representatives who sit on the Appropriations Committee or Civil Rights and Judiciary Committee; and one from each of the two largest caucuses of the Senate and who sit on the Ways and Means Committee or Law and Justice Committee;
- one person from the Governor's Office;
- one person from the Office of the Attorney General;
- one person representing cities;
- one person who is an elected county councilmember representing counties;
- one person representing court clerks;
- eight members from the judicial branch; and
- two nonvoting members: one member from the Office of the Public Defense and one member from the Office of Civil Legal Aid.

The Governor vetoed the section of the 2022 legislation that required staff support to be provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) with assistance from the Office of Financial Management (OFM) as requested by the Committee cochairs. Included in the vetoed section were examples of issues of mutual concern to be discussed at committee meetings. Those examples included: funding legislative mandates, initiatives related to access justice, issues of local concern, courthouse security, and court technology infrastructure. As the basis for the objection, the explanation of the partial veto cited to the requirement that the OFM perform work under the direction of the Committee cochairs, who were required to be members of the legislative and judicial branches of government, rather than by the agency director.

The Committee was required to submit recommendations to the Legislature by November 1, 2024, on whether it should be renewed or changed in any way. The Committee's report stated that it surveyed members of the Board for Judicial Administration (Board), which provides leadership to state courts and develops policies to enhance the administration of courts, and the Board members unanimously voted to support the continuation of the Committee after its sunset date. The Committee is scheduled to sunset on January 1, 2026.

Summary of Bill:

The sunset date for the Committee is repealed, making the Committee permanent. The following provisions previously vetoed by the Governor are included:

- a requirement that the AOC provide staff support;
- specific authority for the Committee to set its own meeting schedule; and
- the list of examples of issues of mutual concern to be discussed at the Committee

meetings.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Committee has provided a space to hear about the state of the judiciary branch from a broader perspective beyond issues that judicial officers face but also challenges faced by other court personnel. It is also an opportunity to discuss issues not just about courts, but the entire ecosystem that supports the judiciary branch. The collaboration between the three branches is moving policy in a more effective direction that helps build the buy-in needed to make improvements around the operations of the courts. Making the Committee permanent will help to unify and centralize statewide efforts in improving the court system and help with coordinated responses between the three branches.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Jamila Taylor, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: Loni Simone.