

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1606

As Reported by House Committee On:
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to state employee access to peer-reviewed journals.

Brief Description: Concerning state employee access to peer-reviewed journals.

Sponsors: Representatives Engell, Bernbaum, Orcutt, Corry, Reeves, Waters, Ramel, Parshley, Reed, Ormsby and Nance.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/6/25, 2/12/25 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to conduct a study on providing state employees with electronic access to peer-reviewed journals.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 30 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Couture, Ranking Minority Member; Connors, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Penner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Schmick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Berg, Bergquist, Burnett, Caldier, Callan, Cortes, Doglio, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Keaton, Leavitt, Lekanoff, Manjarrez, Marshall, Peterson, Pollet, Rude, Ryu, Springer, Stonier, Street, Thai and Tharinger.

Staff: Kate Henry (786-7349).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

A publication where articles written by experts submitted for publication are first evaluated and reviewed by other experts in the same field before being accepted are known as peer-reviewed articles. The peer-review process adds to the quality and accuracy of the research, and is considered more reliable within the academic community.

Access to peer-reviewed articles and journals often requires a subscription or paying per article. The State Library database identified 16,817 magazines and journals, of which 15,163 were peer-reviewed. Agency libraries such as the Washington State Department of Transportation Library, the Natural Resources Building Library, and the Labor and Industries Library provide specialized journal subscriptions and book purchasing for their employees.

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) is a nonpartisan public research group, established by the Legislature in 1983. WSIPP carries out research at the direction of the Legislature or its Board of Directors, conducting multi disciplinary research and cost-benefit analysis in areas such as general government, education, criminal justice, and health.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

WSIPP must conduct a study addressing, at a minimum, potential funding, organizational structure, and policy mechanisms that would provide state employees with electronic access to peer-reviewed journals. The study must be completed by June 30, 2026, and submitted to the appropriate committees of the Legislature.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The study completion date is moved from December 1, 2026, to June 30, 2026. The original bill included a section with an appropriation, which was removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 13, 2025.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) State employees used to be able to access peer-reviewed journals through the State Library. When the recession required reductions, access to journals was cut and never brought back. A portion of funding appropriated for a report had to be used to pay for

journal access to learn about the current research and best practices. In order for state employees to be knowledgeable and provide the best advice to the Legislature and the Governor, access to journals is necessary. A study to determine the most appropriate way for state agencies to gain access to research journals is a great first step.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Keri-Anne Jetzer, Washington State Sentencing Guidelines Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.