

SENATE BILL REPORT

SCR 8406

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections, January 16, 2026

Brief Description: Reestablishing the joint select committee on civic health.

Sponsors: Senators Lovick, Muzzall, Conway, Liias, Nobles, Pedersen, Slatter, Stanford and Wilson, C.; by request of Lieutenant Governor.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections: 1/13/26, 1/16/26 [DP, w/oRec].

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reestablishes the Joint Select Committee on Civic Health.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, TRIBAL AFFAIRS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Valdez, Chair; Kauffman, Vice Chair; Wilson, J., Ranking Member; Fortunato, Hasegawa and Riccelli.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator McCune.

Staff: Greg Vogel (786-7413)

Background: In partnership with the University of Washington Evans School, the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, and the Ruckelshaus Center, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor established the Project for Civic Health. The project seeks to bring together people who are concerned about civic health, to improve governance, to develop practical and transformative ideas, and to create public accountability.

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.

In 2024, the Legislature established the Joint Select Committee on Civic Health to build upon the work of the Project for Civic Health.

The committee consists of 13 members:

- the Lieutenant Governor;
- three members of the majority party and three members of the minority party of the Senate, selected by the President of the Senate; and
- three members of the majority party and three members of the minority party of the House of Representatives, selected by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The Lieutenant Governor serves as the chair of the committee and one member of the majority party and one member of the minority party from opposite chambers serve as vice chairs.

The committee must issue preliminary recommendations and report to the Legislature prior to the 2025 regular session and its final recommendations and report prior to the 2026 regular session, at which time the committee expires.

Summary of Bill: The Joint Select Committee on Civic Health is reestablished to build upon the work of the Project for Civic Health.

As reestablished, the committee consists of 17 members:

- the Lieutenant Governor;
- four members of the majority party and four members of the minority party of the Senate, to be selected by the President of the Senate; and
- four members of the majority party and four members of the minority party of the House of Representatives, to be selected by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The committee must issue a report on its work to the Legislature prior to the 2027, 2028, and 2029 regular sessions.

Authorization for the committee expires at the start of the 2029 regular session.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 2, 2026.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: Yes.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: We've been hard at work on this project for

two years, but surprise surprise, we haven't completely solved the civic health problems. As a consequence, upon unanimous deliberation of committee members, we'd like to keep at this. The bill expands membership as we've heard from numerous legislators they'd really like to be involved, put their oar in the water with regards to how we can improve our civic health. There is bipartisan, universal agreement that we treat each other with respect and we all recognize we're not doing it well enough right now.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator John Lovick, Prime Sponsor; Denny Heck, Lt Governor; John Lovick, Senator; Ron Muzzall, Senator.

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