

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1391

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government

Title: An act relating to statutory committees of the legislature.

Brief Description: Overseeing statutory legislative committees.

Sponsors: Representatives Kessler (co-prime sponsor) and Mastin (co-prime sponsor).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 2/14/01, 2/19/01 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Subjects several legislative agencies to uniform operational policies, procedures, and oversight.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives McMorris, Republican Co-Chair; Romero, Democratic Co-Chair; Miloscia, Democratic Vice Chair; Haigh, Lambert, McDermott and D. Schmidt.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

The Legislature has created many legislative agencies to help it carry out its constitutional duties. The agencies include: (a) the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee; (b) the Joint Committee on Pension Policy; (c) the Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee; and (d) the Joint Legislative Systems Committee.

I. The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC)

Formerly known as the Legislative Budget Committee, the JLARC has many duties including conducting performance audits of state agencies and programs, conducting

sunset reviews, and providing assistance to legislative committees. The committee consists of eight representatives and eight senators who appoint a legislative auditor to assist them in their statutory duties. The committee also has a four-member executive committee. The executive committee and the legislative auditor are responsible for the administrative functions of the committee, including hiring staff and setting their salaries.

II. The Joint Committee on Pension Policy (JCPP)

The JCPP studies pension issues, develops pension policies, studies pension funding, and makes recommendations to the Legislature. The committee consists of eight representatives and eight senators. The JCPP appoints the state actuary whose duties include performing actuarial services for the Department of Retirement Systems, advising the Legislature and the Governor on pension issues, and preparing actuarial fiscal notes on pension bills. The actuary is responsible for hiring staff and, with the approval of the JCPP, setting their salaries.

III. The Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee (LEAP)

The LEAP provides the Legislature with analysis and monitoring of state agency expenditures, budgets, and related fiscal matters. The committee consists of four representatives and four senators. The committee has administrative responsibilities including entering into contracts, and hiring permanent and temporary staff.

IV. The Joint Legislative Systems Committee (JLSC)

The JLSC adopts policies, procedures, and standards regarding the information processing and communications technology of the Legislature. The committee consists of two representatives and two senators. The JLSC appoints a legislative systems coordinator who is responsible for the administration of the committee. The committee also has the power to enter into contracts and hire staff.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

In order to facilitate operational consistency among legislative agencies, the JLARC, the JCPP, the LEAP, and the JLSC are subject to operational policies, procedures, and oversight as deemed necessary by the House Executive Rules Committee, and the Senate Facilities and Operations Committee. The operational policies, procedures, and oversight include the development of biennial budgets, personnel policies and compensation plans, selection of a chief administrator, facilities, contracts, and expenditures.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

This substitute clarifies that the audit functions of the JLARC are not subject to the oversight of the House Executive Rules Committee or the Senate Facilities and Operations Committee. The substitute bill also makes a variety of technical changes amending several sections containing the agencies' administrative authority that were left out of the original bill.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill will allow greater efficiencies and consistencies among the JLARC, the JCPP, the LEAP, and the JLSC through the oversight of the House Executive Rules Committee and the Senate Facilities and Operations Committee.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Kessler, co-prime sponsor; and Representative Mastin, co-prime sponsor.