

Chapter 44.48 RCW
LEGISLATIVE EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM COMMITTEE

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Alternative economic and revenue forecasts to be provided at the request of the legislative evaluation and accountability program committee: RCW 82.33.030.

RCW 44.48.010 Committee created—Composition. There is hereby created a legislative evaluation and accountability program committee which shall consist of four senators and four representatives from the legislature. The senate members of the committee shall be appointed by the president of the senate and the house members of the committee shall be appointed by the speaker of the house. Not more than two members from each house shall be from the same political party. All members shall be appointed before the close of the 1977 session of the legislature and before the close of each regular session during an odd-numbered year thereafter. Members shall be subject to confirmation, as to the senate members by the senate, and as to the house members by the house. [1980 c 87 § 40; 1977 ex.s. c 373 § 1.]

RCW 44.48.020 Terms of members—Vacancies. The term of office of the members of the committee who continue to be members of the senate and house shall be from the close of the session in which they were appointed or elected as provided in RCW 44.48.010 until the close of the next regular session during an odd-numbered year, or, in the event that such appointments or elections are not made, until the close of the next regular session during an odd-numbered year during which successors are appointed or elected. The term of office of such committee members as shall not continue to be members of the senate and house shall cease upon the convening of the next regular session

of the legislature during an odd-numbered year after their confirmation, election, or appointment. Vacancies on the committee shall be filled by appointment by the remaining members. All such vacancies shall be filled from the same political party and from the same house as the member whose seat was vacated. [1980 c 87 § 41; 1977 ex.s. c 373 § 2.]

RCW 44.48.030 Continuation of memberships, powers, duties, etc.

On and after the commencement of a succeeding regular session of the legislature during an odd-numbered year, those members of the committee who continue to be members of the senate and house, respectively, shall continue as members of the committee as indicated in RCW 44.48.020 and the committee shall continue with all its powers, duties, authorities, records, papers, personnel and staff, and all funds made available for its use. [1980 c 87 § 42; 1977 ex.s. c 373 § 3.]

RCW 44.48.040 Travel expenses of members—Reimbursement.

The members of the committee shall serve without additional compensation, but shall be reimbursed in accordance with RCW 44.04.120 while attending sessions of the committee or meetings of any subcommittee of the committee, or on other committee business authorized by the committee. [1977 ex.s. c 373 § 4.]

RCW 44.48.045 Administration.

The administration of the legislative evaluation and accountability program committee is subject to RCW 44.04.260. [2001 c 259 § 12.]

RCW 44.48.050 Expenses of committee—Vouchers.

Subject to RCW 44.04.260, all expenses incurred by the committee, including salaries and expenses of employees, shall be paid upon voucher forms as provided by the administrator and signed by the chair or vice chair of the committee and attested by the secretary of said committee, and the authority of said chair and secretary to sign vouchers shall continue until their successors are selected after each ensuing session of the legislature. Vouchers may be drawn on funds appropriated by law for the committee: PROVIDED, That the senate and the house may authorize the committee to draw on funds appropriated by the legislature for legislative expenses. [2009 c 549 § 6017; 2001 c 259 § 13; 1977 ex.s. c 373 § 5.]

RCW 44.48.060 Officers and rules.

The committee shall have the power and duty to appoint its own chair, vice chair, and other officers; and to make rules for orderly procedure. [2009 c 549 § 6018; 1977 ex.s. c 373 § 6.]

RCW 44.48.070 Committee's duties with respect to data processing capability for fiscal matters—LEAP defined. The committee shall acquire a data processing service capability under the exclusive jurisdiction and control of the legislature acting through the

committee and its administrator for the purpose of providing the legislature and its staff with the type of information required for in-depth analysis and monitoring of state agency expenditures, budgets, and related fiscal matters. The legislative evaluation and accountability program established in this section may be referred to in this chapter as the LEAP administration. [1977 ex.s. c 373 § 7.]

RCW 44.48.080 Duties of LEAP administration. To carry out the provisions of RCW 44.48.070 the LEAP administration shall provide for:

- (1) Automated databases and application systems in support of legislative requirements to monitor, evaluate, analyze, report, and review;
- (2) Maintenance of computer software, application programs, databases, and related documentation;
- (3) Education, training, and programming services;
- (4) Procedural documentation support; and
- (5) Consulting assistance on special projects. [1977 ex.s. c 373 § 8.]

RCW 44.48.090 Committee's powers. The committee shall have the following powers:

- (1) To have timely access, upon written request of the administrator, to all machine readable, printed, and other data of state agencies relative to expenditures, budgets, and related fiscal matters;
- (2) To suggest changes relative to state accounting and reporting systems to the office of financial management or its successor and to require timely written responses to such suggestions; and
- (3) Subject to RCW 44.04.260, to enter into contracts; and when entering into any contract for computer access, make necessary provisions relative to the scheduling of computer time and usage in recognition of the unique requirements and priorities of the legislative process. [2001 c 259 § 14; 1979 c 151 § 158; 1977 ex.s. c 373 § 9.]

RCW 44.48.100 Reports to legislature—Minutes. The committee shall have the power to make reports to the legislature. The committee shall keep complete minutes of its meetings. [1987 c 505 § 46; 1977 ex.s. c 373 § 10.]

RCW 44.48.110 Witness fees and mileage. Each person who appears before the committee, other than a state official or employee, may upon request receive for attendance the fees and mileage provided for witnesses in civil cases in courts of record in accordance with the provisions of RCW 2.40.010, which shall be audited and paid upon the presentation of proper vouchers signed by such person and approved by the secretary and chair of the committee. [2009 c 549 § 6019; 1977 ex.s. c 373 § 11.]

RCW 44.48.120 LEAP administrator and other assistants—Employment—Duties of LEAP administrator. The committee is hereby

authorized and empowered to appoint an officer to be known as the LEAP administrator who shall be the executive officer of the committee and assist in its duties and shall compile information for the committee.

Subject to RCW 44.04.260, the committee is hereby authorized and empowered to select and employ temporary and permanent personnel and fix their salaries.

The duties of the administrator shall be as follows:

(1) To manage the LEAP operations.

(2) To assist the several standing committees of the house and senate; to appear before other legislative committees; and to assist any other legislative committee upon instruction by the committee.

(3) To provide the legislature with information obtained under the direction of the committee.

(4) To maintain a record of all work performed by the administrator under the direction of the committee and to keep and make available all documents, data, and reports submitted to the administrator by any legislative committee. [2001 c 259 § 15; 1977 ex.s. c 373 § 12.]

RCW 44.48.130 Exemption from consolidated technology services agency. The committee is hereby expressly exempted from the provisions of chapter 43.105 RCW. [1977 ex.s. c 373 § 13.]

RCW 44.48.140 Cooperation with legislative committees and others. The committee shall cooperate, act, and function with Washington state legislative committees and may cooperate with the councils or committees of other states similar to this committee and with other interstate research organizations. [1977 ex.s. c 373 § 14.]

RCW 44.48.150 State expenditure information website—Access to data—Maintenance—Capital and transportation projects—Website testing. (1) By January 1, 2009, in collaboration with the office of financial management, using existing databases and structures currently shared, the office of the legislative evaluation and accountability program committee shall establish and make available to the public a searchable state expenditure information website. The state expenditure information website shall provide access to current budget data, access to current accounting data for budgeted expenditures and staff, and access to historical data. At a minimum, the website will provide access or links to the following information as data are available:

(a) State expenditures by fund or account;

(b) State expenditures by agency, program, and subprogram;

(c) State revenues by major source;

(d) State expenditures by object and subobject;

(e) State agency workloads, caseloads, and performance measures, and recent performance audits;

(f) State agency budget data by activity; and

(g) The inventory of state agency fees required by RCW 43.88.585.

(2) "State agency," as used in this section, includes every state agency, office, board, commission, or institution of the executive,

legislative, or judicial branches, including institutions of higher education.

(3) The state expenditure information website shall be updated periodically as subsequent fiscal year data become available, and the prior year expenditure data shall be maintained by the legislative evaluation and accountability program committee as part of its ten-year historical budget data.

(4) By January 1, 2014, current and future capital project and transportation project investments must be coded with the geographic information sufficient to permit the public to search and identify appropriation and expenditure data at the parent and subproject level to the extent available by:

- (a) State legislative district;
- (b) County; and
- (c) Agency project identifier.

(5) The office of the legislative evaluation and accountability program committee must, within existing resources, update the state expenditure information website to allow the public to search for capital budget and transportation projects by selecting from an online geographical map. The map must allow an in-depth examination of financial and other data associated with such projects. Data elements must include:

- (a) Project title;
- (b) Total appropriation;
- (c) Project description;
- (d) Expenditure data; and
- (e) Administering agency.

(6) The website must be easy to use, contain current and readily available data, and allow for review and analysis by the public. The legislative evaluation and accountability program committee must test the website with potential users to ensure that it is easy to navigate and comprehend. [2013 c 327 § 2; 2013 c 63 § 2; 2008 c 326 § 2.]

Reviser's note: This section was amended by 2013 c 63 § 2 and by 2013 c 327 § 2, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

Intent—2013 c 327: "The intent of the legislature is to make state capital budget and transportation budget appropriation and expenditure data as transparent and easy to use by the public as is feasible. It is important to provide information to the public on state capital and transportation investments by legislative district and county in a format that is easy to navigate and comprehend. Providing such information contributes to governmental accountability, public participation, agency efficiency, and open government." [2013 c 327 § 1.]

Intent—2008 c 326: "The intent of the legislature is to make state revenue and expenditure data as open, transparent, and publicly accessible as is feasible. Increasing the ease of public access to state budget data, particularly where the data are currently available from disparate internal government sources but are difficult for the public to collect and efficiently aggregate, significantly contributes to governmental accountability, public participation, agency efficiency, and open government." [2008 c 326 § 1.]

RCW 44.48.160 Website presentation about state budgets. The legislative evaluation and accountability program, in conjunction with the office of financial management, must create a website presentation accessible 24 hours a day beginning August 15th of each year containing the following information:

(1) (a) A summary of each of the following:

(i) The adopted operating budget and supplemental operating budget for the most recent fiscal biennium;

(ii) The adopted capital budget and supplemental capital budget for the most recent fiscal biennium; and

(iii) The adopted transportation budget and supplemental transportation budget for the most recent fiscal biennium;

(b) Every summary required by (a) of this subsection must additionally include:

(i) The numbers of each bill that was part of the budget for that session;

(ii) Access information for each bill on the official legislative website;

(iii) The date that each bill was approved with brief instructions on how to locate roll call votes online; and

(iv) The number of votes cast for and against each bill;

(2) Graphical depictions of funds subject to outlook and a data visualization showing total budgeted funds for the state operating budget by functional areas of government for the most recent biennium;

(3) Tables provided by the office of financial management comparing state and local expenditures with personal income from the most recent fiscal year available to each fiscal year going back 20 years; and

(4) A list, generated by the legislative evaluation and accountability program in coordination with the office of financial management, of every bill for which an analysis was produced in compliance with RCW 43.135.031, and links to the legislative website for each bill on the list so the public may see how legislators voted and instructions for voters on how to locate analyses produced in compliance with RCW 43.135.031. [2023 c 109 § 9.]

Findings—2023 c 109: See note following RCW 29A.32.070.