

CHAPTER 43.

[H. B. 77.]

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET COMMITTEE.

AN ACT creating and establishing a legislative budget committee and providing for its selection, terms, powers, duties, rules, findings and reports; and declaring an emergency.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

SECTION 1. There is hereby created a legislative budget committee which shall consist of three 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 senate members, nor more than two house members shall be appointed from any one political party. All members shall be appointed before the close of the 1951 session of the legislature and before the close of each regular session thereafter. Members shall be subject to confirmation, as to the senate members by the senate, and as to the house members by the house. In the event of a failure to appoint committee members, either on the part of the president of the senate or on the part of the speaker of the house, or in the event of a refusal by either the senate or the house to confirm appointments on the committee, then the members of the committee from either house in which there is a failure to appoint or confirm shall be elected forthwith by the members of such house.

SEC. 2. The committee shall have the power and duty to appoint its own chairman, vice-chairman, and other officers; to make rules and regulations for orderly procedure; to perform, either through the legislative budget committee or through the legis-

Created.

Members.

Appointed, when.

Confirmation by legislature.

Failure to appoint.

Powers and duties.

Study expenditures.

lative council or through subcommittees of the legislative budget committee, all duties and functions relating to the study of expenditures by the state government, its officers, boards, committees, commissions, institutions, and other state agencies.

Committee to study administrative procedures.

SEC. 3. The committee shall have power to examine and study the administrative organization and procedures of the state government, its officers, boards, committees, commissions, institutions and other state agencies and to make recommendations to the legislature, where found advisable, directed to the elimination of unnecessary overlapping or duplication of functions, procedures and expenditures, and to the promotion of economy and efficiency in state government.

Powers.

SEC. 4. The committee shall have the following powers:

Current condition of state funds.

(a) To make current examination and reports concerning the current condition of all state funds, appropriations and other state moneys; concerning whether or not such appropriations are being currently expended for the purposes and within the statutory restrictions provided by the legislature; and concerning the current availability of revenue to meet expenditures under appropriations;

State expenses.

(b) To make such other studies and examinations of the expenses of the state government and its state agencies as it may find advisable, and to hear complaints, hold hearings, gather information and make findings of fact with respect thereto.

Reports from governor.

SEC. 5. The committee shall have the power to receive messages and reports in person or in writing from the governor or any other state officials and to study generally any and all business relating to the expenses of state government and its state agencies during the interim between regular legislative sessions.

Interim.

SEC. 6. The committee shall have the power to make reports from time to time to the members of the legislature, to the legislative council, and to the public with respect to any of its findings or recommendations. The committee shall keep complete minutes of its meetings. The committee shall make and distribute its final report to the members of the ensuing legislature at least ten days prior to the convening of the legislature.

Reports to legislature.

SEC. 7. The committee shall cooperate, act and function with the legislative council and with the councils or committees of other states similar to this committee and with other interstate research organizations.

Cooperation with legislative council.

SEC. 8. In the discharge of any duty herein imposed, the committee and its subcommittees shall have the authority to examine and inspect all files, records and accounts of any state office, department, institution, board, committee, commission or agency, and to administer oaths, issue subpoenas, compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of any papers, books, accounts, documents and testimony, and to cause the deposition of witnesses, either residing within or without the state, to be taken in the manner prescribed by laws for taking depositions in civil actions in the superior courts.

May examine files.

Oaths, subpoenas, depositions.

SEC. 9. In case of the failure on the part of any person to comply with any subpoena issued in behalf of the committee, or on the refusal of any witness to testify to any matters regarding which he may be lawfully interrogated, it shall be the duty of the superior court of any county, or of the judge thereof, on application of the committee, to compel obedience by proceedings for contempt, as in the case of disobedience of the requirements of a subpoena issued from such court or a refusal to testify therein.

Contempt.

Witness fees. SEC. 10. Each witness who appears before the committee by its order, other than a state official or employee, shall receive for his attendance the fees and mileage provided for witnesses in civil cases in courts of record, which shall be audited and paid upon the presentation of proper vouchers signed by such witness and approved by the secretary and chairman of the committee.

Legislative auditor. SEC. 11. The committee is hereby authorized and empowered to appoint an officer to be known as the legislative auditor, and to fix his compensation, who shall act as secretary of the committee and assist in its duties and shall compile information for the committee. The committee is hereby authorized and empowered to select and employ other clerical, legal, accounting, research and other assistants that it may deem desirable in the performance of its duties, and the compensation and salaries shall be fixed by the legislative budget committee.

Other employees.

Duties of legislative auditor. The duties of the legislative auditor shall be as follows:

(a) To ascertain the facts and make recommendations to the legislative budget committee and under their direction to the committees of the state legislature concerning

- (1) state budget;
- (2) revenues and expenditures of the state;
- (3) the organization and functions of the state, its departments, subdivisions and agencies.

(b) To assist the appropriations committees of the house and senate, respectively, in consideration of the budget and all bills carrying express or implied appropriations and all legislation affecting state departments and their efficiency; to appear before any other legislative committee and to assist any other legislative committees upon instruction by the legislative budget committee.

(c) To provide all legislative committees and members of the legislature with information obtained under the direction of the legislative budget committee.

(d) To maintain a record of all work performed by the legislative auditor under the direction of the legislative budget committee and to keep and make available all documents, data and reports submitted to him by any legislative committee.

SEC. 12. The term of office of the members of the committee who continue to be members of the senate and house shall be from the time of confirmation, election or appointment until the confirmation or election of a new committee as provided in section 1 hereof. 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 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.

Terms of office.

Vacancies.

SEC. 13. On and after the commencement of a succeeding general session of the legislature, those members of the committee who continue to be members of the senate and house, respectively, shall continue as members of the committee until their successors are appointed and confirmed or elected, and the committee shall continue with all its powers, duties, authorities, records, papers, personnel and staff, and all funds made available for its use.

Members continue until successors confirmed.

SEC. 14. The members of the committee shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for their expenses incurred while attending sessions of the committee or meetings of any subcommittee of the committee, or while engaged on other com-

Compensation.

Expenses.

mittee business authorized by the committee to the extent of fifteen dollars per day, plus eight cents per mile in going to and coming from committee sessions or committee meetings or for travel on other committee business when authorized by the committee.

Vouchers.

SEC. 15. All expenses incurred by the committee, including salaries and expenses of employees, shall be paid upon voucher forms as provided by the auditor and signed by the chairman or vice chairman of the committee and attested by the secretary of said committee, and the authority of said chairman 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 generally by the legislature for legislative expenses or upon any special appropriation which may be provided by the legislature for the expenses of the committee.

Partial
invalidity.

SEC. 16. If any section, subsection, paragraph or provision of this act shall be held invalid by any court for any reason, such invalidity shall not in any way affect the validity of the remainder of this act.

Emergency.

SEC. 17. This act is necessary for the immediate support of the state government and of the existing public institutions of the state and shall take effect immediately.

Passed the House February 26, 1951.

Passed the Senate March 3, 1951.

Approved by the Governor March 8, 1951.