

MINUTES
Public Records Exemptions Accountability Committee
(“Sunshine Committee”)
Virtual Meeting held via Zoom Webinar
John A. Cherberg Building – Conference Room ABC – Olympia, WA

March 24, 2026

Members Present: Vice Chair Thompson, Sen. Jeff Wilson, Sen. Sharon Shewmake, Rep. Larry Springer, Jennifer Steele, Tricia Smith, Melissa Luck, and David Zeeck

Members Absent: Rep. Rob Chase and Zohaib Ali

Staff Present: Assistant Attorney General Lisa Petersen (Committee Counsel), Kelly Gonzalez, and Elizabeth Mateo (Committee Staff)

1) Call to Order

1.1 Introduction / Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

Vice Chair Thompson called the meeting of the Sunshine Committee (Committee) to order at 9:04 a.m., March 24, 2026, remotely via Zoom Webinar and at the John A. Cherberg Building, Conference Room ABC, Olympia, WA.

Seven out of ten members were present at the beginning of the meeting. A quorum was established.

1.2 Adoption of Agenda for March 24, 2026

Motion: To adopt the March 24, 2026 agenda with the removal of items 2.1 and 2.6. Moved by David Zeeck, seconded by Sen. Wilson. Approved unanimously.

1.3 Review and Approve July 29, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the July 29, 2025 meeting minutes. Moved by Sen. Wilson, seconded by Jennifer Steele. Approved unanimously.

2) New Business

2.1 Employment and Licensing – [RCW 42.56.250\(1\)\(m\)](#) [Springer] (No. 128 on Schedule of Review)

Item 2.1 was removed from the agenda.

2.2 Emergency or Transitional Housing – [RCW 42.56.390](#) [Thompson] (No. 190 on Schedule of Review)

Vice Chair Thompson explained the exemption in RCW 42.56.390 exempts the names of individuals residing in emergency or transitional housing that are furnished to the department of revenue or a county assessor to substantiate a claim for property tax exemption. Vice Chair Thompson spoke to a couple of assessors and reviewed statutes in 84.36. Vice Chair Thompson explained there is a lot of information that must be given to the Department of Revenue and the county assessors to qualify for this. The only piece that is not disclosed is the names of the individuals, everything else is disclosable. Vice Chair Thompson does not believe there is a public interest given the fact that all the other details are disclosable.

Senator Shewmaker joined the meeting at 9:09 am.

Motion: To retain exemption RCW 42.56.390. Moved by Vice Chair Thompson, seconded by Jennifer Steele. Approved unanimously.

2.3 Privileges – [RCW 5.60.060](#) [Thompson] (No. 219 on Schedule of Review)

Vice Chair Thompson explained that this is not an exemption from public disclosure, It is a testamentary privilege in RCW 5.60.060. It is the list of privileged communications in the Washington State statutes. Vice Chair Thompson provided some examples. None of the communications involve records given over to a government agency. This is not a public disclosure exemption. It pertains to people who cannot be examined by the government or examined in a court.

Motion: To retain this exemption RCW 5.60.060. Moved by David Zeeck, seconded by Jennifer Steele. Approved unanimously.

2.4 Child Support – [RCW 26.23.120\(1\)](#) [Steele] (No. 302 on Schedule of Review)

Item 2.4 was carried forward.

2.5 Higher Education – [RCW 28C.10.050\(2\)\(a\)](#) [Sen. Shewmake] (No. 307 on Schedule of Review)

Sen. Shewmake explained that this RCW relates to the requirements of private vocational schools, such as workforce training and post-secondary education schools with the purpose of instructing, training, or preparing persons for any vocation or profession. These schools are required to submit financial information such as financial statements, tax returns, credit reports, etc. to the workforce training and education coordinating board to prove they are solvent to protect students. The financial information submitted is not subject to public disclosure.

Motion: To recommend retaining the exemption in RCW 28C.10.050(2)(a) as is. Moved by David Zeeck, seconded by Vice Chair Thompson. Yes – 5 (Sen. Sharon Shewmake, Rep. Larry Springer, Jennifer Steele, Tricia Smith, and Melissa Luck. Abstention – (Sen. Wilson). Motion passed.

2.6 Motor Vehicles, Transportation – [RCW 46.12.635](#) [Rep. Chase] (No 361 on Schedule of Review)

Item 2.6 was removed from the agenda.

3) Public Comment

No general comment from the public was made.

4) Committee Business

4.1 Report on Committee Vacancies

Vice Chair Thompson shared that he believed Pete Holmes was going to be appointed as Chair of the Sunshine Committee. However, it was brought to Pete's attention that Liquor and Cannabis Board members are prohibited from performing any other governmental service while serving on the board. Since Pete currently serves on the Liquor and Cannabis Board, he withdrew his application. Vice Chair Thompson is continuing conversations with other individuals regarding the position. There are currently three vacancies.

4.2 Priority List of Exemptions for Review

Vice Chair Thompson explained that the "Priority List of Exemptions for Review" included the next group of exemptions needing to be reviewed by the Committee and asked for volunteers. Vice Chair Thompson volunteered to review Schedule of Review nos. 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, and 196. Mr. Zeeck offered to take on Schedule of Review nos. 179, 181, 182, and 223. Rep. Springer volunteered for on Schedule of Review no. 162. Sen. Shewmake offered to take on Schedule of Review nos. 165, 166, and 168. Melissa Luck volunteered for Schedule of Review no. 185. Emails will be sent out to committee members with assignments.

4.3 HB 2244 - 2025-26

Lunell Haught, Washington Coalition for Open Government (WashCOG) Board Member, asked if the Sunshine Committee planned to discuss steps forward to get legislation advocated in the past moved into the next session. Vice Chair Thompson explained that HB 2244 made it through the House, and made it to the Senate Committee, but was not heard in the Senate. Vice Chair Thompson noted that WSU and other universities stepped up to ask that the section surrounding anonymous donations to university foundations be removed from the bill, the House removed that section of the bill. The Sunshine Committee will be talking about bringing the bill forward at the final Sunshine Committee meeting of the year. Lunell noted a concern that large anonymous donations could have undue influence on programs and asked that a financial threshold be added. Vice Chair Thompson asked WashCOG to send a letter of recommendation, and he will see that it is added to a future agenda. Sen. Wilson asked who would be testifying on the bill and indicated that he might want to amend the bill. Vice Chair explained the process surrounding changes to recommendations from the Sunshine Committee.

5) Adjourn

The Committee adjourned at 9:44 a.m.