**WASHINGTON STATE**
**BAR ASSOCIATION**

# Bill Tracking Manual

## How to track proposed legislation using the State's bill tracking system

*Questions? Please contact WSBA's Outreach & Legislative Affairs Coordinator:*

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*Updated: November 2017*

# Contents

# Overview – Tracking Options: Email & List

There are two ways to track bills through the leg.wa.gov website: email and list.

1. **Email**: You will receive automatic email updates when the bill(s) you choose to track move in the legislative process.
    a. **Pro**: This is a hands-off, relatively effortless, and good way to stay informed in real-time.
    b. **Con**: You do not have access to a list so you cannot run reports or quickly break down data.
    c. *This option is not recommended if you will be tracking a lot of bills and want to provide interested parties with a report.*
2. **List**: You can view multiple bills' statuses in a list and run reports to quickly disseminate information.
    a. **Pro**: You have access to a list of the bills you are tracking. Up front, lists provide a large amount of information you can forward to selected parties.
    b. **Con**: You will not receive real-time automatic updates and need to keep visiting the list's page to see a bill's status.
    c. *This option is not recommended if you will not be monitoring your list manually or are only tracking a few bills.*

**Recommended**: *Use the email option to track select bills you need real-time updates for and the list option to track the progress of all bills of interest.*

***FYI - If you are unsure of the significance of a term, refer to the glossary included with the legislative primer materials.***
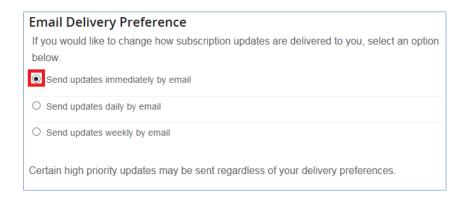
# Tracking Bills – Email

1. Go to the [Bill Information](http://www.app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/) page (http://www.app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/), enter only the number of the bill you want to track (i.e. enter 5011 for SB 5011) and click "Search":

   a. **Note: Only enter bill numbers into the text field (SB 5011 should be entered as 5011). This applies nearly anytime you use the WA State legislative website.**

   

2. On the right side of the page, select "Get Email Notifications":

   

3. Enter the email address you want the system to send notifications to.

4. If this is the first time you are signing up for email notifications you need to confirm your email address and select your "email delivery preference" (it is recommended you select "Send updates immediately by email" for important bills). Entering a password is optional.

   

5. Click "Submit." You are now signed up to receive updates for that bill.

**6.** Repeat step 2 for every bill you want to receive automatic email notifications.

Email updates look like:

You are subscribed to HB 1298-2017-18 for Washington State Legislature Bills. This information has recently been updated, and is now available.

**20 - April 23, 2017 - By resolution, returned to House Rules Committee for third reading.**

Bill Description - Prohibiting employers from asking about arrests or convictions before an applicant is determined otherwise qualified for a position.

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This message was sent to the subscribers of the HB 1298-2017-18 update list. Update your subscriptions, modify your password or email address, or stop subscriptions at any time on your Subscriber Preferences Page. You will need to use your email address to log in. If you have questions or problems with the subscription service, please visit subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com.

This service is provided to you at no charge by Washington State Legislature Bills.

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This email was sent to kelli.schmidt@gmail.com using GovDelivery, on behalf of: Washington State Legislature Bills · 2404 Chandler Court SW, Olympia, WA 98502-6052 1-360-786-7000
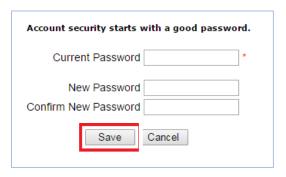
*powered by* **gov**DELIVERY.
*get the word out.*

# Tracking Bills – List: Registering an Account

To track bills on the Washington State legislature's website, you need to register for an account.

1.  To register for an account follow this [link](link) (leg.wa.gov),

2.  Select "Track Bills" and click "Register for a new account."

3.  Enter a username and your email address (twice), click "Submit."



> **Create an account to customize reports, manage personal bill tracking lists, or change default settings.**
>
> User Name [ ]
> E-mail Address [ ]
> Confirm E-mail Address [ ]
>
> 1.  We will send your password to your e-mail address.
>     **Spam or junk e-mail filters may collect our e-mail message by mistake.**
>     **To ensure e-mail delivery please add LegReports@leg.wa.gov to your e-mail address book.**
> 2.  Follow the link in your e-mail to log into the site.
> 3.  At that point, you have the option to change your password to something you can easily remember.
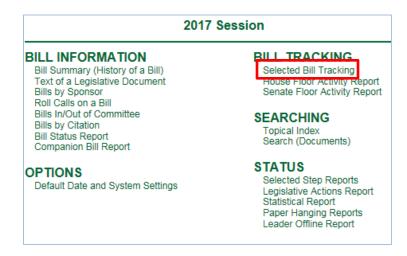>
> [ Submit ] [ Cancel ]

3.  "LegReports@leg.wa.gov" will send you an email with a temporary password. Follow the email's instructions and insert the password into the "Current Password" text field. Below the current password, enter a new password (twice) and click "Save."



> **Account security starts with a good password.**
>
> Current Password [ ] *
>
> New Password [ ]
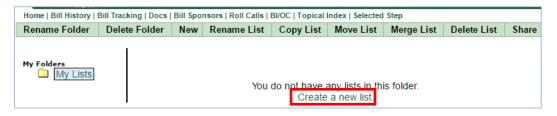> Confirm New Password [ ]
>
> [ Save ] [ Cancel ]

4.  This will be your login information for your bill tracking account.

5.  You have now registered for an account and can begin setting up the bill tracker!
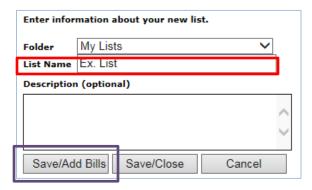
# Tracking Bills – List: Getting Set Up

1. After the first time you log in to your account, you will be sent to the "Home" page below.

2. Click on "Selected Bill Tracking."



3. To start tracking bills you need to create a list. You can create multiple lists. Lists are an organizational tool for storing bills, much like folders organize documents on your computer.

   a. *Using different lists is recommended if you want to track groups of bills separately.*

4. To create a list, select "Create a new list."



5. Insert a "List Name" that works best for the bill(s) you are tracking, a description of the list is optional. Select "Save/Add Bills."

6. **If you only have one bill to add to the tracker**, insert the bill number in the text field and click "Add" (you still may add other bills later). If you have multiple bills to add, skip to step 7.
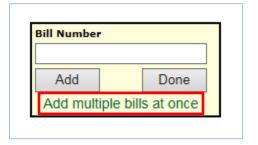


    a. **Note: Only enter bill numbers into the text field (SB 5011 should be entered as 5011). This applies nearly anytime you use the WA State legislative website.**

7. **If you have multiple bills to add to the tracker**, click on "Add multiple bills at once" (you still may add other bills later).
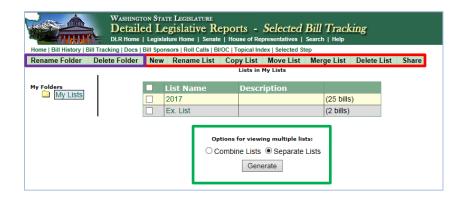


8. You may enter as many bills as you like, so long as each bill number is separated by a comma and a space. Once you have entered all the bills you want to track, click "Add." You will then be sent to the "Home" page as described on pages 9-12).

# Tracking Bills – List: Navigating "Home" 1/2

1. After you set up your tracker your "Home" page will look something like this:



2. Edit your folder(s) with the "Rename Folder" and "Delete Folder" buttons in the green bar.

   a. Your lists are stored in folders. You can enter multiple lists in one folder, as shown above.

3. View single lists by clicking on the list's name. Note: bills in lists are populated with abbreviations; see the shaded, blue box on page 13 for clarification.

4. Edit your list(s) by clicking the white "check" box to the left of each list, then clicking on the appropriate link above the list(s).

5. To view multiple lists at once, click the white boxes to the left of each list.

6. Choose to view "Separate Lists" (below, left: two separate tables) or "Combined Lists" (below, right: single table with multiple lists), then click "Generate."

# Tracking Bills – List: Navigating "Home" 2/2

*This section focuses on the top navigation options, above the green bar on the "Home" page.*



1. **Home**: returns you to the menu shown in step 1 on page 7.

2. **Bill History**: provides more information on a bill, allows you to search through the full text of a bill.

    a. To find more information on a bill, enter the bill number into the text field and click "Search."

    b. To search the full text of a bill click "Search the full text of a bill." This is an alternate search tool used to find a bill without the bill number. (See steps b.i. – b.iv.).

i. If you know any of the bill's text you are searching for, type it into "Search Term(s)." Hover your mouse over the "i" icon for more information.

ii. If you know any keywords located in the bill's file name, type those into "Documents Named Like." Hover your mouse over the "i" icon for more information.

iii. Ensure you select the document type (you will frequently use bills and amendments).



3. **Bill Tracking**: sends you to the List Home page, as shown on the top of pages 9 and 10.

4. **Docs**: similar to the "Bill History" tool. Search for bills by entering terms associated with file names or statutes by their numbers. Refer to the glossary for details on the appropriate codes.

5. **Bill Sponsors**: search for bills by their sponsors (i.e. Representative, Senator, Committee, etc.).
   a. You can also sort bills by primary and secondary bills.

6. **Roll Calls**: search for a bill's roll calls.

7. **BI/OC** = Bills in/out of Committee. This is a good tool for monitoring a **Committee's** progress by viewing all bills that have been referred to that Committee.

8. **Topical Index**: search for bills in sorted topics or by bill number. This is a great tool for finding similar bills to the one(s) you are tracking.

9. **Selected Step**: search for bills by their progress in the legislative process.

   a. E.g. you can search for all Senate bills that have passed the House:

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New Search | | Print List | | Export Data | | Report Views | |

Date Options           Current View: Standard

**Selected Step Report: Senate Bills Passed House (2017)**
**Only the Senate bills that have passed the House**

Page 12  (Rows 1-100 of 175)  Page Size 100 ∨

| ☐ | Bill | | Flags | Title | Status | Veto | Date | Original Sponsor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | ESB 5008 | Docs | afd | REAL ID compliance | C 310 L 17 | | 05/16/2017 | King |
| ☐ | SB 5011 | Docs | fo# | Business corporation act | C 28 L 17 | | 04/17/2017 | Pedersen |
| ☐ | SSB 5012 | Docs | fo | Trust assets distribution | C 29 L 17 | | 04/17/2017 | Pedersen |
| ☐ | SSB 5018 | Docs | a | Accessible taxi HOV lane use | C 311 L 17 | | 05/16/2017 | Hasegawa |
| ☐ | SSB 5022 | Docs | afd | Education loan information | C 154 L 17 | | 04/27/2017 | Bailey |
| ☐ | ESB 5023 | Docs | f | Schools/excess levies | C 6 L 17 | | 03/15/2017 | Wellman |
| ☐ | SB 5030 | Docs | afd# | Trafficking, etc/time limits | C 231 L 17 | | 05/05/2017 | Darneille |
| ☐ | SSB 5031 | Docs | fo | Uniform money services act | C 30 L 17 | | 04/17/2017 | Angel |
| ☐ | SSB 5035 | Docs | af | Investigational med. product | C 212 L 17 | | 05/05/2017 | Pedersen |
| ☐ | SB 5036 | Docs | # | PUD unit priced contracting | C 85 L 17 | | 04/20/2017 | Takko |
| ☐ | SB 5037 | Docs | f# | DUI 4th offense/felony | C 335 L 17 | PV | 05/16/2017 | Padden |
| ☐ | SB 5039 | Docs | fo | Electronic legal material | C 106 L 17 | | 04/21/2017 | Pedersen |
| ☐ | SB 5040 | Docs | fd | Uniform business orgs. code | C 31 L 17 | | 04/17/2017 | Pedersen |
| ☐ | ESB 5042 | Docs | f | Insurance/funeral benefits | C 32 L 17 | | 04/17/2017 | Angel |
| ☐ | SSB 5046 | Docs | af# | Language of public notices | C 312 L 17 | | 05/16/2017 | Hasegawa |
| ☐ | ESSB 5048 | Docs | afd | Operating budget | S Rules 3 | | 04/23/2017 | Braun |
| ☐ | SB 5049 | Docs | af# | Relocation assistance | C 213 L 17 | | 05/05/2017 | King |
| ☐ | SSB 5051 | Docs | f | State land lease provisions | C 56 L 17 | | 04/19/2017 | Brown |
| ☐ | SSB 5069 | Docs | fo | Associate degree education | C 120 L 17 | | 04/25/2017 | Walsh |
| ☐ | SB 5075 | Docs | f | Seed buyer & dealer disputes | C 33 L 17 | | 04/17/2017 | Takko |
| ☐ | SSB 5077 | Docs | f | Housing assistance/women | C 214 L 17 | | 05/05/2017 | Angel |
| ☐ | SSB 5079 | Docs | | Dental services for tribes | C 5 L 17 | | 02/22/2017 | McCoy |
| ☐ | SSB 5081 | Docs | afo | Uniform law on notarial acts | C 281 L 17 | | 05/10/2017 | Pedersen |
| ☐ | SSB 5083 | Docs | f# | Sex offenders/victim notice | C 86 L 17 | | 04/20/2017 | Pearson |
| ☐ | SB 5085 | Docs | fo# | Voidable transactions act | C 57 L 17 | | 04/19/2017 | Pedersen |
| ☐ | ESSB 5086 | Docs | ad | Capital budget 2017-2019 | S Rules 3 | | 04/23/2017 | Honeyford |
| ☐ | ESB 5096 | Docs | ad | Transport. budget 2017-2019 | C 313 L 17 | PV | 05/16/2017 | King |
| ☐ | ESB 5097 | Docs | fd | Chehalis board appointments | C 27 L 17 | | 04/17/2017 | Braun |
| ☐ | SSB 5100 | Docs | af | Financial literacy seminars | C 177 L 17 | | 05/04/2017 | Bailey |
| ☐ | 2ESSB 5106 | Docs | a | Involuntary treatment act | C 14 L 17 E3 | | 07/06/2017 | O'Ban |
| ☐ | 2SSB 5107 | Docs | f# | Early childhood ed & assist | C 178 L 17 | | 05/04/2017 | Billig |
| ☐ | SB 5118 | Docs | f | Personal needs allowance | C 270 L 17 | | 05/10/2017 | Rolfes |

# Tracking Bills – List: Navigating "List" Page

If you want to view a specific list (as described in step 3 of page 9), you will be sent to the page below:



**Home**: returns you to the List Home page as shown at the top of pages 9 and 10.

**Add Bill**: returns you to the same screen as steps 6 – 8 on page 8.

**Copy Bill**: creates a copy of a selected bill in another list. There will now be two copies of one bill in two locations – the original list and a new list.

1. Select the bill(s) you wish to copy to another list by clicking the white check boxes, select "Copy Bill."
2. Select the list you wish to send the copy of the bill to and click "OK."

**Move Bill**: allows you to transfer a bill from one list to another. Unlike the "Copy Bill" option, a copy of the bill is *not* made. The bill will only be located in the new list.

1. Select the bill(s) you wish to move by clicking the white check boxes, click "Move Bill."
2. Select the list you wish to move the bill to and click "OK."
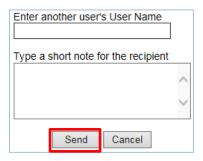
**Delete Bill**: removes the bill from its current list.

1. Select the bill(s) you wish to delete by clicking the white check boxes, click "Delete Bill."
2. A pop-up window will ask you to verify deleting the selected bill(s). Click "OK."

**Print List**: sends you to a printer-friendly version of the selected list.

1. Proceed to print as you would with any other web-page.

**Share**: allows you to share a list with another user. Enter their user name, type a note, and click "Send."

1. If you wish to email your list, you need to export the data. Please see the next step.

**Export Data:** allows you to export list data to an Excel, text, or Word file. This creates a report that contains abbreviations, knowing their meaning is helpful (see shaded, blue box on page 13).
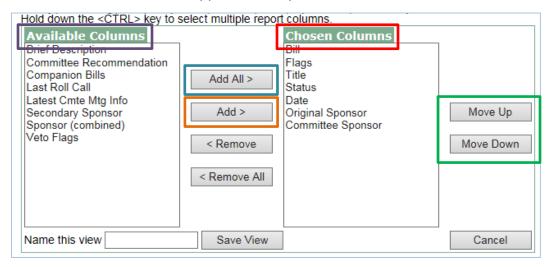
*Recommended file type: Excel.*

**Report Views**: Allows you to edit what/how information is displayed when data is exported.

*For reference: the tracker uses the term "views" to refer to how manipulable data is displayed.*

*While going through the next steps, refer back to the shaded, blue box below the list of bills on page 13.*

1. Click "Report Views." You have two options to choose from in the drop-down menu:

    a. "Custom Views" allows you to customize the information that is displayed when exporting.

    b. "Standard Views" exports your data with preset options.

2. "Custom Views": will lead you to a list of saved views. If you have not saved a custom view the box will be empty.

3. You can create a view by selecting "Add." Otherwise, you can edit, rename, or delete saved views by clicking on the saved view then the action you want to perform. The following directions are relevant for exporting data to an Excel sheet.

    a. Export data from a list to excel (see "Export Data" above). As shown in the exported spreadsheet on the next page, each column is listed in the "Chosen Columns."

4. Items in "Available Columns" are not included in the spreadsheet, but can be added to "Chosen Columns." Items in "Chosen Columns" will appear in the spreadsheet.

```
Hold down the <CTRL> key to select multiple report columns.

Available Columns                          Chosen Columns
Brief Description                          Bill
Committee Recommendation                   Flags
Companion Bills            [ Add All > ]    Title
Last Roll Call                             Status
Latest Cmte Mtg Info                       Date
Secondary Sponsor         [  Add >   ]     Original Sponsor    [ Move Up ]
Sponsor (combined)                         Committee Sponsor
Veto Flags                                                     [ Move Down ]
                          [ < Remove  ]

                          [ < Remove All ]

Name this view [          ]  [ Save View ]                     [ Cancel ]
```

5. To add **all** items from "Available Columns" to "Chosen Columns", click the "Add All >" button.

6. To add **an** item from "Available Columns" to "Chosen Columns," click the item in "Available Columns" and click "Add>."

7. The columns are displayed left-to-right in the exported spreadsheet in the same order they are shown in the "Chosen Columns" box from top-to-bottom.

   a. You can rearrange the order of columns by selecting a column, then clicking the "Move Up" or "Move Down" buttons (This impacts your list view and your exported reports).

8. With minimal reformatting, the exported spreadsheet will appear similar to the spreadsheet below. The significance of the columns are explained on page 16-18.

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Bill | Flags | Title | Status | Date | Original Sponsor | Committee Sponsor |
| 2 | SHB 1055 | a | Military members/pro bono | C 163 L 17 | 5/4/2017 | Kilduff | APP |
| 3 | HB 1056 | f | Military/consumer protection | H Rules 3C | 6/21/2017 | Kilduff | |
| 4 | HB 1091 | a | Solemnizing marriages | C 130 L 17 | 4/27/2017 | Appleton | |
| 5 | HB 1139 | f | Office of pub. guardianship | H Rules 3C | 4/23/2017 | Kilduff | |
| 6 | SHB 1183 | af# | Creative districts | C 240 L 17 | 5/8/2017 | McBride | APP |
| 7 | EHB 1378 | | Disqualification of judges | H Rules 3C | 4/23/2017 | Graves | |
| 8 | 2SHB 1402 | a | Incapacitated persons/rights | C 268 L 17 | 5/10/2017 | Jinkins | APP |
| 9 | HB 1494 | | Private road maintenance | H Rules 3C | 4/23/2017 | Morris | |
| 10 | HB 1676 | f# | Service animals in training | C 170 L 17 | 5/4/2017 | Sullivan | |
| 11 | E2SHB 1783 | | Legal financial obligations | H Rules 3C | 6/21/2017 | Holy | APP |
| 12 | 2SHB 1904 | f | Personal info. sale & tax | H Rules C | 4/23/2017 | Smith | FIN |
| 13 | SB 5011 | f# | Business corporation act | C 28 L 17 | 4/17/2017 | Pedersen | |
| 14 | SSB 5012 | f | Trust assets distribution | C 29 L 17 | 4/17/2017 | Pedersen | LAW |
| 15 | 2SSB 5021 | d | Military members/pro bono | S Rules 3 | 4/23/2017 | O'Ban | WM |
| 16 | SB 5040 | f | Uniform business orgs. code | C 31 L 17 | 4/17/2017 | Pedersen | |

# Tracking Bills – How to Read Exported Reports

*This section covers the titles of the "Chosen Columns" as shown in the "Chosen Columns" window and the spreadsheet, both on page 15.*
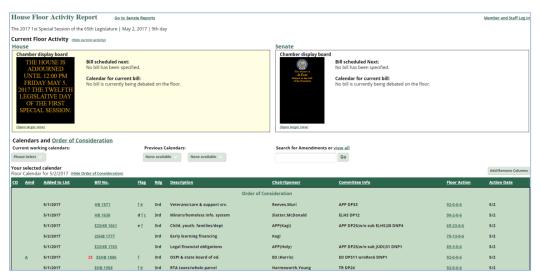
1. **Bill**:

    a. **HB** = House Bill

    b. **EHB =** Engrossed House Bill

    c. **SHB =** Substitute House Bill

    d. **2SHB =** Second Substitute House Bill

    e. **E2SHB =** Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill

    f. **SB =** Senate Bill

    g. **ESB =** Engrossed Senate Bill

    h. **SSB =** Substitute Senate Bill

    i. **ESSB =** Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill

    j. **2SSB =** Second Substitute Senate Bill

    k. **E2SSB** = Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill

2. **Flags**: as explained by the shaded, blue & shaded, yellow boxes on page 13.

3. **Title**: an abridged description of the bill.

4. **Status**: represents where a bill currently is in the legislative process, like a committee.

    a. All bills that have passed the legislature and were signed into law by the Governor resemble this: C 163 L 17. "C" represents what chapter the bill has been filed under and "L" represents the year it was signed into law (17 = 2017).

5. **Date**: the last date the bill moved (as captured in its status).

6. **Original Sponsor**: the name of the bill's prime sponsor.

7. **Committee Sponsor**: the last committee that referred the bill with a "do pass" recommendation.

**Refer to the "Available Columns" window on page 15.** *The following columns can be included in your exported spreadsheet but were not included in the sample exported spreadsheet.*
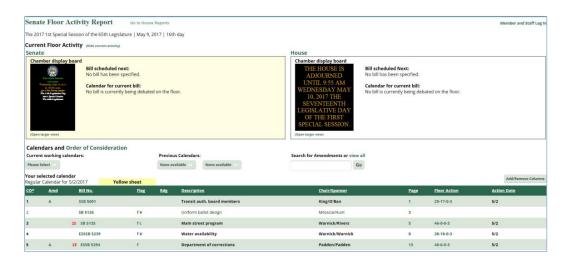
1. **Brief Description**: a short description of the bill.

2. **Committee Recommendation**:

   a. Abbreviations in parentheses represent the Committee the bill was amended in.

   b. Numbers represent the total number of voting Committee members in the majority.

   c. DP: Do pass

   d. DPA: Do pass as amended

   e. DNP: Do not pass

   f. w/oRec: Without recommendation

3. **Companion Bills**: see glossary.

4. **Last Roll Call**: the most recent vote on the bill. In order from left to right, the numbers stand for:

   i. Yeas, nays, absent, excused (respectively)

   ii. Ex.: 82-13-0-3 = 82 yeas, 13 nays, 0 absent, 3 excused.

5. **Latest Cmte Mtg Info**: the last date the bill was heard in a committee meeting, what action was taken, which committee the action was taken, and the meeting's start time.

6. **Secondary Sponsor**: see glossary.

7. **Sponsor (combined)**: combines original sponsor and committee sponsor.

8. **Veto Flags**: if the bill, or parts of the bill, are vetoed it will show in this column.

# Other Ways to Track – Floor Activity Reports

1.  From page 6, "House Floor Activity Report" (depending on activity) will look like the image below.

    i.  This is a great tool to use when a bill you are monitoring is being debated on the floor.



2.  From page 6, "Senate Floor Activity Report" will look similar to the House Floor Activity Report.

    i.  This is a great tool to use when a bill you are monitoring is being debated on the floor.



**REMEMBER: TVW is an outstanding tool as well. Live and archived committee hearings, executive sessions and floor debates can be watched on TVW.org.**