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HB 309: REJECT OFFICERS COMP. COMMISSION REPORT

The legislature established the State Officers Compensation Commission in 2009 with unprecedented authority: its recommendations would become law unless rejected by a majority of each house within 60 days. The legislature, trusting the commission and its decisions, incorporated the following language into its statutory framework: "It is the policy of the legislature that the commission recommend an equitable rate and form of compensation."

On January 7th, 2018, the commission failed in this charge. The data supplied by the division to assist the commission failed to support the SOCC's final recommendation.

The SOCC initially recommended reducing per diem from the federal rate to the executive rate but instead decided to eliminate per diem entirely for legislators living within 50 miles of the session; "the lack of legislative affairs agency staff to process actual payments as well as the desire that legislators not receive per diem when staying in their own homes."

The commission acted without proper data or exploration of incurred expenses by legislators during session.

The SOCC's job is not to reprimand legislators for political stalemates and tension by curtailing salaries and allowances- that is done through votes at the ballot box. The SOCC's recommendations fails its statutory obligation by not providing "an equitable" rate, and it makes having a citizen legislature more work to achieve.