



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Chair Manning, Vice-Chair Thomsen, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of Senate Bill 1517. Senate Bill 1517 is quite close to a bill I had drafted in the 2021 session, House Bill 2243. Both seek to rebalance the branches of government, by requiring the Governor to involve the Legislature in extensions of states of emergency. Sadly, HB 2243 was never even scheduled for a hearing in the 2021 long session. I greatly appreciate Chair Manning’s willingness to hold a public hearing to start this much-needed conversation and, of course, Sen. Boquist’s long involvement and thoughtful engagement on emergency management.

Both my bill from last session and SB 1517 would require the Governor to issue a public written statement prior to declaring a state of emergency, and both state that after the state of emergency is terminated, the Governor may not declare another state of emergency for the same reason unless authorized by a joint resolution from the Legislative Assembly. There are a couple key differences I would like to highlight, in hopes that Senate Bill 1517 could be amended in a bipartisan manner and move forward.

As drafted, SB 1517 would require Legislative *approval* to extend the state of emergency. As much as I wish it were otherwise, the Legislature has proven better at not doing things than doing things. I would support an amendment requiring the Legislature be called into session each time the state of emergency is extended. It would not *require* us to approve the state of emergency, or require any specific action, but it would give us a veto power on the extension.

Additionally – and I would like to give credit to my colleague Rep. Owens for bringing this to my attention – I would support requiring that we solicit input from County Commissioners in impacted counties. Local authorities need to be involved in this process.

Colleagues, I’ve served in countries with indefinite states of emergency. None of them are democracies. This legislation isn’t about who the current Governor is, or even what party they represent. For nearly two-years, the *entire* response to the COVID state of emergency has come from the Executive Branch. Rather than having one statewide-

elected official make all policy decisions, SB 1517 would ensure that the 90 legislators elected from every corner of the state are able to weigh-in. Democracy works best when there are more voices at the table. Yes, it's messier, and sometimes inconvenient, but we owe it to the people we represent.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marshall Z. Wilde". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Marty Wilde

State Representative, House District 11