

---

---

## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sHB 5219**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE ORDER OF GUBERNATORIAL SUCCESSION UNDER CERTAIN PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY CIRCUMSTANCES.***

#### **SUMMARY**

Under the state constitution, if the office of the governor is vacant, the lieutenant governor, followed by the Senate president pro tempore, exercises the governor's power and duties. This bill establishes an extended statutory line of gubernatorial succession if the offices of governor and lieutenant governor are vacant while there is a vacancy in the office of the Senate president pro tempore because the Senate has not elected a replacement as required by the constitution, leaving no one to constitutionally ascend to the governor's office (see BACKGROUND).

Specifically, after the president pro tempore, the bill sets the succession order as follows: (1) speaker of the House of Representatives, (2) state treasurer, (3) secretary of the state, (4) state comptroller, (5) attorney general, (6) Senate majority leader, and then (7) House majority leader.

Under the bill, if all the offices earlier in the line of succession are vacant, or in combination with earlier officers being passed over due to an officer's (1) refusal to take the oath of office; (2) absence from the state; (3) ineligibility to serve as governor (for example, the person is not yet 30 years old); or (4) other inability to serve, the next officer in line becomes governor.

Additionally, if a vacancy occurs in the office of the governor due to death, resignation, refusal to serve, or removal from office, as is the case under the constitutional line of succession, upon taking the oath of office, the officer serves until a new governor is chosen at the next regular election and duly qualified. Similarly, in the case of

impeachment or the governor's absence from the state, if the offices of the lieutenant governor and Senate president pro tempore are vacant, the next officer in line, as described above, temporarily exercises the governor's powers and duties until the governor has been acquitted or has returned.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Constitutional Line of Succession***

Under the state constitution, if a permanent vacancy occurs in the office of the governor (due to death, resignation, refusal to serve, or removal from office), the lieutenant governor succeeds to the office, followed by the Senate president pro tempore. In either case, the officer serves as governor until a new governor is chosen at the next regular election and duly qualified. When a governor is being impeached or is absent from the state, these officers temporarily exercise the governor's powers and duties, if and until the governor is acquitted of impeachment, or until the governor returns from his or her absence.

If the president pro tempore is elevated to a higher office while the Senate is in session, it must, within 15 days of the president pro tempore's taking his or her new oath of office, elect one of its members as president pro tempore. If the General Assembly is not in session, the secretary of the state must convene the Senate within 15 days of a vacancy to elect a president pro tempore (Conn. Const. art. IV, §§ 18-20).

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 16    Nay 3    (03/11/2026)