

FINAL BILL REPORT

2SSB 5122

C 94 L 07

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Preserving regulatory assistance provisions.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Rockefeller and Swecker; by request of Office of Financial Management).

Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

House Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs

House Committee on Appropriations

Background: The Washington State Office of Regulatory Assistance (ORA) was created in the Office of Financial Management in 2003 as an expansion of the Office of Permit Assistance. ORA helps answer permitting questions and provides access to information about state regulations. In addition, ORA assists with coordinating between the layers of state, local, and federal permit review.

ORA has two primary ways it delivers its services: a regulatory help desk assisting approximately 2,000 callers per year; and case managers located in regional offices who facilitate, coordinate, and help resolve disputes that can arise in permitting.

ORA is scheduled to terminate in 2007, pursuant to the Washington Sunset Act. As required by legislation, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) conducted a sunset review to assist policymakers with deciding whether ORA should be continued, modified, or terminated.

After completing their review, JLARC recommends that the Legislature repeal the existing sunset date and consider establishing a future sunset date and review. Additionally, JLARC recommends that ORA develop and implement a plan to demonstrate performance outcomes for the customers it serves and report to the Legislature on its performance and compliance with statutory duties.

Summary: The existing sunset date of June 30, 2008, is repealed and a new sunset date of June 30, 2012, is established.

An additional reporting requirement regarding negotiation and implementation of voluntary cost reimbursement agreements is added to existing reporting requirements. The first report is due on June 1, 2008, and biennially thereafter.

The term "applicant" is replaced with "proponent" making no substantive change.

ORA must ensure the equitable delivery and provision of assistance services, regardless of project type, scale, fund source, or assistance request.

The prohibition on new cost reimbursement agreements taking effect on July 1, 2007, is removed.

JLARC must, by July 1, 2008, provide a status report to the Governor and appropriate committees of the Legislature on the compliance of ORA with the sunset review proposed final report dated January 4, 2007.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	49	0
House	97	0

Effective: April 18, 2007 (Section 15)
July 22, 2007