

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 2141

*As Passed House
March 13, 1991*

Title: An act relating to the state oral history program.

Brief Description: Establishing a state oral history program.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Prince, Jacobsen, Anderson and Winsley.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
State Government, March 6, 1991, DPA;
Passed House, March 13, 1991, 98-0.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
STATE GOVERNMENT**

Majority Report: *Do pass as amended.* Signed by 10 members: Representatives Anderson, Chair; Pruitt, Vice Chair; McLean, Ranking Minority Member; Bowman, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler; R. Fisher; Grant; Moyer; O'Brien; and Sheldon.

Staff: Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

Background: The Division of Archives and Records Management of the Office of the Secretary of State is administered by the state archivist. State law directs the state archivist to conduct an oral history program. The purpose of the program is to record and document the oral history of former members and staff of the Legislature, former state governmental officials and personnel, and other citizens of interest. The records of this oral history program must be indexed, available for reference, and properly preserved.

Summary of Bill: The oral history program authorized by state law must be conducted by the secretary of state at the direction of an Oral History Advisory Committee. The secretary must contract with independent oral historians and through the history departments of the state universities for conducting and recording the interviews. Transcripts and photographs may be published for distribution to libraries and for sale to the public.

The advisory committee is composed of two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker, two members of the Senate appointed by the president of the Senate, the chief clerk, the secretary of the Senate, and the secretary of state. It must select appropriate interview subjects, select materials for publication, and provide certain advice to the secretary of state.

Fiscal Note: Requested March 4, 1991.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect July 1, 1991.

Testimony For: (1) The State is losing legislators whose history or role in historical events should be documented. The bill will revitalize the state's oral history program. (2) Because our modern society conducts its long distance communications by telephone, oral history is needed to document events in the way letters documented them in the past.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Representative Prince; Representative Jacobsen; and Ralph Munro, Secretary of State (in favor).