

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1659

*As Reported By House Committee on:
State Government*

Title: An act relating to computer-based geographic information.

Brief Description: Creating a geographic information task force.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Jacobsen and R. Fisher.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
State Government, March 1, 1991, DPA.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
STATE GOVERNMENT**

Majority Report: *Do pass as amended.* Signed by 9 members: Representatives Anderson, Chair; Pruitt, Vice Chair; McLean, Ranking Minority Member; Bowman, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler; R. Fisher; Grant; O'Brien; and Sheldon.

Staff: Linda May (786-7135).

Background: A geographic information system (GIS) is a computer-based electronic mapping tool. The tool allows GIS operators to layer several different types of mapping information sharing a common geographic reference point. For example, a GIS map can illustrate the relation of natural features such as rivers, shorelines, and soil types to roads, sewers, and gas, power or telephone lines. A number of state, county and city governments as well as federal and private entities have developed or are developing computer-based geographic information systems.

Summary of Amended Bill: A Geographic Information Task Force is created, to be convened by the Department of Information Services (DIS). The task force is to be composed of representatives from state agencies, the Legislature, higher education, cities and counties, and other interested parties. In addition, the task force includes a representative familiar with public disclosure law and provisions, designated to the task force by the Public Disclosure Commission. Staff support for the task force is to be provided by DIS.

The task force is to submit a report to the governor and the Legislature by January 1993. The report is to include recommendations for appropriate roles for agencies and private sector firms, procedures for data sharing and funding of GIS development, and other related topics. The task force is to terminate in March 1993.

An appropriation of \$50,000 for DIS is requested for the purposes of this act.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill proposes a 15-member task force. The amended bill replaces this group with an existing ad-hoc GIS task force already convening informally. The amended bill also adds a designee from the Public Disclosure Commission to the task force.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Appropriation: Yes.

Testimony For: (original bill): A number of entities in state and local government and in the private sector are developing these systems. We need to get out front with some state policy on the many issues associated with GIS use. The task force will set some standards and direction for the State and will address important questions emerging with GIS development and use.

Testimony Against: (original bill): The task force does not include a member who can speak specifically to public disclosure laws and concerns.

Witnesses: Sam Hunt, Department of Information Services; Robin Trenbeath, WA State Geographic Information Council (both in favor); and Jerry Sheehan, American Civil Liberties Union (in favor with addition of PDC representation).