

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1800

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS,  
APRIL 1, 1991

**Brief Description:** Creating the office of international relations and protocol.

**SPONSORS:** House Committee on State Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Fraser, Ballard, Van Luven, Ebersole, Anderson, McLean, Jacobsen, Cantwell, Ferguson, Belcher, Rasmussen, Wang, Locke, Winsley, Paris, Phillips and Wineberry).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chairman; Roach, Vice Chairman; Madsen, and Sutherland.

**Staff:** Barbara Howard (786-7410)

**Hearing Dates:** April 1, 1991

**BACKGROUND:**

A number of state agencies carry out activities with an international dimension. For example, the Departments of Agriculture and Natural Resources participate in a number of trade-related activities such as trade conferences and arranging site tours for foreign visitors. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction promotes international awareness through curriculum and student/teacher exchange programs.

The state's official liaison and protocol office with foreign governments is the Office of International Relations and Protocol in the Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED). It administers Washington's two sister-state programs with Japan and China, and serves as a protocol agent. Although the office maintains an informal working relationship with other state agencies, there is no formal coordination of Washington's international relations.

For the 1989-91 biennium, DTED's budget included approximately \$200,000 for the Office of International Relations and Protocol for two FTE staff. For the 1991-93 biennium, DTED expects to reduce this budget to approximately \$138,000 for one FTE staff.

**SUMMARY:**

An Office of International Relations and Protocol is created within the Governor's Office. It serves as the state's official liaison and protocol office with foreign governments. The Governor appoints the director of the office and fixes the salary. The director and any staff are exempt employees. Other agencies may temporarily loan employees to the office.

The duties of the Office of International Relations and Protocol include advising and assisting the Governor, the Legislature, and other independently elected officials on international developments; serving as a clearinghouse for information; coordinating protocol for visiting foreign dignitaries; and coordinating the state's existing and future sister-state relationships. The office may also create temporary advisory committees to deal with specific international issues, and to accept gifts or grants to help defray the costs of appropriate hosting of foreign dignitaries.

An International Relations Advisory Committee is created for the state. The purpose of the advisory committee is to advise the office on matters pertaining to state and local government. Membership on the advisory committee is to represent a variety of affected interests and entities, and includes a statewide elected official, a representative of the judiciary, and four legislators. The Governor appoints members to the advisory committee.

The powers, duties and functions of the Office of International Relations and Protocol in the Department of Trade and Economic Development are transferred to the newly created Office of International Relations and Protocol within the Governor's Office.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** available

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

The state's participation in international trade, cultural and environmental affairs needs higher visibility and sharper focus. We are at a significant point in development of closer ties with nations in periods of transition and growth.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** PRO: Hal Zimmerman, Camas; William F. Asbury, President, Olympia World Affairs Council; Ralph Munro, Secretary of State