

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1097

As Reported By House Committee On:
State Government

Title: An act relating to consolidating the state capital historical association and the Washington state historical society.

Brief Description: Consolidating the state capital historical association and the state historical society.

Sponsors: Representatives Jacobsen, Brumsickle, R. Fisher, Anderson, Ogden, Basich, Sheldon, Romero, Vance, Wang, Leonard, Shin, Edmondson, Foreman, Wood, Ballard, Brough, Long, Kessler, Miller, Talcott, Wolfe, Sommers, Tate, Cooke, Springer and Forner; by request of Office of Financial Management, Washington State Historical Society and State Capital Historical Association.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
State Government, February 1, 1993, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Anderson, Chair; Veloria, Vice Chair; Reams, Ranking Minority Member; Vance, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell; Conway; Dyer; King; and Pruitt.

Staff: Bonnie Austin (786-7135).

Background: Washington currently has three state historical societies: the Washington State Historical Society; the Eastern Washington State Historical Society; and the State Capital Historical Association (SCHA). These societies are responsible for collecting and preserving historical materials, operating state museums, planning for and conducting state historical celebrations, and promoting cultural, educational, and artistic activities related to the state's history.

Each historical society is governed by its own board of trustees. The director of each society is appointed by its governing board with the consent of the governor. The Washington State Heritage Council oversees all of the historical societies.

The Washington State Historical Society is located in Tacoma and operates a museum there. The SCHA is located in Olympia. It operates the State Capital Historical Museum, which has been in existence for approximately 50 years.

In 1992, the Office of Financial Management (OFM) requested that state agencies come up with efficiencies in the delivery of state services. This request has resulted in the proposed merger of the Washington State Historical Society and the SCHA. This merger is contained in the governor's budget. The merger will result in operational efficiencies in agency accounting, payroll, personnel and audit functions.

Summary of Bill: The State Capital Historical Association (SCHA) is abolished and its powers, duties, and functions are transferred to the Washington State Historical Society.

All documents, records, written material, assets, funds, office equipment, and tangible property in the possession of the SCHA are transferred to the Washington State Historical Society. All SCHA employees are transferred in accordance with state civil service and collective bargaining law. Existing collective bargaining agreements will not be altered. The director of OFM will be responsible for resolving questions arising from the transfer.

All rules, pending business, contracts, and obligations of the SCHA will be continued and acted on by the Washington State Historical Society.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect July 1, 1993.

Testimony For: This is an efficiency measure. Consolidating these two societies will result in operational and financial efficiencies. The public is often confused about the difference between the two societies. There is a public perception of duplication of effort. This merger will eliminate these problems. The unique mission of the Capital Historical Association will be preserved. The State Historical Society is committed to preserving the history of state government and the political history and culture of Washington.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Peter Simpson, Washington State Historical Society (Pro); Charles Fowler, State Capital Historical Association (Pro); and Derec Vallet, State Capital Historical Association (Pro).