

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1680

As Reported By House Committee On:
Trade, Economic Development & Housing

Title: An act relating to import-export communication technology.

Brief Description: Authorizing funds to set up a pilot project to employ electronic communication equipment from Washington locations to import-export offices in Russia.

Sponsors: Representatives Eide, Wineberry, Pruitt, Valle, Sheldon, Quall, Brough, Holm, Jacobsen and Riley.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Trade, Economic Development & Housing, February 17, 1993,
DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members:
Representatives Wineberry, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Forner,
Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking
Minority Member; Campbell; Casada; Conway; Morris; Quall;
Schoesler; Sheldon; Springer; Valle; and Wood.

Staff: Charlie Gavigan (786-7340).

Background: Washington State provides export assistance through a variety of public programs and funding.

The Department of Agriculture and the Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) are engaged in market development activities that include research and market identification programs and specific information about potential buyers and export markets. DTED programs also target key overseas markets and industries. The Small Business Export Finance Assistance Center (EAC) is a nonprofit corporation created to provide export counseling. The Small Business Export Assistance Center guides potential exporters through the procedures and documentation that exporting requires. The EAC operates the Pacific Northwest Export Assistance Project, which provides extensive technical assistance to a small number of businesses with export potential.

The International Marketing Program for Agricultural Commodities and Trade (IMPACT), at Washington State University, and the Center for International Trade in Forest Products (CINTRAFOR), at the University of Washington, conduct research and provide information about current and potential markets for Washington's agricultural and forest products.

The Tacoma World Trade Center received an appropriation this biennium through the Department of Trade and Economic Development of \$90,000 to enhance export opportunities for Washington businesses.

Summary of Bill: An appropriation of \$50,000 is made to the Department of Trade and Economic Development to contract with the Tacoma World Trade Center to establish a pilot program that utilizes newly available electronic communication equipment from locations throughout Washington State to communicate with Russia regarding export opportunities. The purpose is to build trade capacity promoting jobs for small and medium-sized businesses in Washington.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 15, 1993.

Appropriation: \$50,000 to the Department of Trade and Economic Development.

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

Testimony For: The globalization of the economy has resulted in international competition that challenges the state in international and domestic markets. One in five jobs in Washington is trade-related; the state must successfully export products for the well-being of the whole state economy. This program will help small and medium-sized companies successfully export products or services by establishing a reliable communication system with Russia.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: (Pro): Representative Tracey Eide, prime sponsor; Louise Sandeson, Port of Tacoma; and Alex Clementiev, Neurobotics, Inc.