

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2777

As Reported By House Committee On:
State Government

Title: An act relating to libraries.

Brief Description: Creating the Washington libraries for the 21st century program.

Sponsors: Representatives Jacobsen, Moak, Edmondson, Anderson, Pruitt, Finkbeiner, Johanson and Cothern.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
State Government, February 2, 1994, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members:
Representatives Anderson, Chair; Veloria, Vice Chair;
L. Thomas, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell;
Conway; King and Pruitt.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members:
Representatives Reams, Ranking Minority Member; and Dyer.

Staff: Bonnie Austin (786-7135).

Background: The State Library Commission consists of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and four commissioners appointed by the Governor. The commission is responsible for: maintaining the State Library to provide library and information services to legislators, state officials and state employees; providing library services to residents and staff of state institutions; collecting and distributing copies of state publications; serving as a depository for Washington's newspapers; and serving as the primary interlibrary loan, information, reference and referral center for all libraries in the state. The state librarian is appointed by the commission and is responsible for implementing commission policy as well as managing and administering the State Library.

In 1991, the Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services developed 12 issue statements and created an action plan for libraries in Washington in the next 10 years. The issues prioritized as numbers one and

three related to public access for all individuals and fitting libraries into the information technology revolution.

Summary of Bill: The Washington Libraries of the 21st Century Program is created. The purpose of the program is to create public access to information available through electronic technologies; to provide matching grants to public libraries for such items as equipment, software, licenses, telecommunications; to partially match money raised through other public and private sources for these purposes; and to encourage libraries to form partnerships. The program will be administered by the State Library in cooperation with the Department of Information Services, local libraries and libraries of institutions of higher education.

The Washington State Library Commission is directed to establish a Libraries for the 21st Century Advisory Committee. The committee will advise the agency on grant criteria, the use of program funds, budget development and the monitoring of program results. The committee must include members from rural and urban libraries, libraries at institutions of higher education, businesses using or marketing information through electronic technologies, and the Department of Information Services.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Appropriation: The sum of \$6,000 from the general fund to the State Library.

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

Testimony For: The electronic information technology revolution is comparable in scope to the introduction of the printing press. Many cannot afford to access these new technologies except through the public libraries. If there is no public funding for these types of services, only the "information elite" will have access to it. The State Library is the perfect place to coordinate local library access. Local libraries should be encouraged to develop partnerships so that they do not duplicate purchases. Through programs such as this, senior citizens and disabled people can have access to enlarged computer text and voice synthesizing software that they might not be able to afford on their own.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Representative Ken Jacobsen, prime sponsor (pro); Nancy Zussy, State Library (pro); Bruce Ziegman, Washington Library Association/Local Libraries (pro); Jim Taylor, Washington Library Association/Local Libraries (pro); and Ron Crossland, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (pro).