

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5221

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

**Title:** An act relating to the Washington rural development council.

**Brief Description:** Establishing the Washington rural development council.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Trade, Technology & Economic Development (originally sponsored by Senators Skratek, Erwin, M. Rasmussen, Deccio and Barr).

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Trade, Economic Development & Housing, April 2, 1993,  
DPA.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Wineberry, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Campbell; Conway; Schoesler; Sheldon; Springer; Valle; and Wood.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Morris.

**Staff:** Charlie Gavigan (786-7340).

**Background:** Over the past decade, much of rural Washington experienced economic distress and population decline as compared to the rapidly growing Puget Sound region. In response to this period of rural recession, a series of state programs were established or expanded to specifically address the problems facing rural communities with a primary focus being placed on "distressed areas" and "timber impact areas."

In 1990, the federal government by presidential initiative established the Rural Development Council. The council is comprised of representatives from the federal, state, local and tribal governments along with private and nonprofit sectors in an effort to promote coordination and cooperation in promoting economic vitality in the rural areas.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** The Washington State Rural Development Council is formally recognized by the state of Washington. The council is a partnership between state, federal and local governments, tribal governments, and the public and private sectors and is organized as a mutual effort to address the problems facing rural communities, enhance their viability and self-reliance, and look for ways to coordinate and consolidate the efforts of all who serve rural communities.

The council's mission and objectives include: (1) coordinating and applying private, local, state, tribal and federal resources to support the development of viable, self-reliant rural communities according to locally conceived and driven strategies; (2) serving as a forum for communication between members of the rural community; (3) acting as an advocate for change in policy and rules that inhibit the viability of rural communities; (4) serving as a resource developer to maximize knowledge of available resources to assist rural communities; (5) providing a forum for policy analysis concerning existing and proposed rural development strategies in Washington; (6) promoting coordination and cooperation between all levels of government and private, public and nonprofit groups in order to promote rural economic vitality; (7) promoting the establishment of rural/urban linkage partnerships that will be mutually beneficial in alleviating the distress of rapid economic growth, or decline, and promoting economic vitality; (8) identifying and addressing federal, state, and local administrative barriers that hinder economic vitality; (9) providing policy analysis on existing and proposed development strategies for tribes in Washington; and (10) identifying and providing opportunities to educate and inform state, federal, local, and local policy and program staff as to the needs of rural Washington.

The council is located in either a federal or state agency as determined by the council. The costs incurred by the council are to be limited to the amounts appropriated by the state and federal governments along with membership fees and grants from public and private sources. The council is scheduled to terminate under the sunset evaluation process on June 30, 1998.

If funding is not provided for in the 1993-95 operating budget, the bill is null and void.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** The appropriation is removed and a null and void clause is added.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested March 22, 1993.

**Effective Date of Amended Bill:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void if not funded in the budget.

**Testimony For:** This council will enable the federal, state, and local governments, in conjunction with the private sector, to assist rural economies in Washington State through greater cooperation and coordination, and through the development of more effective strategies.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Senator Sylvia Skratek, prime sponsor (pro); Mary McBride, Chair, Rural Development Council (pro); and K. D. Rosenberg, Northeast Tri-County Area (pro).