

HOUSE BILL REPORT

2SSB 5264

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

Title: An act relating to trade and economic development.

Brief Description: Establishing a Washington state trade office in the Russian Far East.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators M. Rasmussen, Bluechel, Skratek, Erwin, Deccio, Roach, Sheldon, Williams, Moore, Loveland, Sutherland, Bauer and Winsley).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Trade, Economic Development & Housing, March 29, 1993,
DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members:
Representatives Wineberry, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Forner,
Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking
Minority Member; Campbell; Casada; Conway; Morris; Quall;
Schoesler; Sheldon; Springer; and Valle.

Staff: Kenny Pittman (786-7392).

Background: The state of Washington has trade offices in Tokyo, Taipei, and Paris. These offices were established to promote overseas trade and commerce opportunities for Washington businesses. In December 1992, Russia opened a consulate general in Seattle. Many Washington businesses are interested in establishing business and trade relations in Russia, especially in the Russian Far East, consistent with the goal of promoting Pacific Rim trade.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Trade and Economic Development is directed to establish a trade office in the Russian Far East.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: 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: There is an opportunity for the state to establish a long-term relationship with this region of Russia. We have worked together on an informal basis in the past. This will formalize that relationship and increase opportunities for trade with an important Pacific Rim trading partner.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Senator M. Rasmussen, prime sponsor (Pro); Fred Romero, Department of Trade and Economic Development (Pro); Ralph Munro, Secretary of State (Pro); Jim Boldt, Port of Tacoma (Pro); Art Scheunemann, Department of Agriculture (Pro); Henry Yates, Port of Seattle (Pro); and Ralph Mackey, Everett Sister Cities (Pro).