

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SSB 5264

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 15, 1993

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)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, TECHNOLOGY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5264 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Skratek, Chairman; Sheldon, Vice Chairman; Bluechel, Deccio, Erwin, M. Rasmussen, and Williams.

Staff: Blaine Gibson (786-7457)

Hearing Dates: January 27, 1993; February 5, 1993

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5264 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rinehart, Chairman; Spanel, Vice Chairman; Anderson, Bauer, Bluechel, Cantu, Gaspard, Hargrove, Hochstatter, Jesernig, McDonald, Moyer, Niemi, Pelz, Quigley, Roach, L. Smith, Snyder, Sutherland, Talmadge, West, Williams, and Wojahn.

Staff: Martin Chaw (786-7715)

Hearing Dates: February 17, 1993; March 8, 1993

BACKGROUND:

Presently Washington State has trade offices in Tokyo, Taipei, and Paris, but has no representation in Russia. 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:

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

A null and void clause is added, making the bill contingent upon funding in the 1993-95 biennial budget.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR (Trade, Technology & Economic Development):

A trade office in the Russian Far East would greatly help Washington business develop trade and business opportunities in Russia.

TESTIMONY AGAINST (Trade, Technology & Economic Development): None

TESTIFIED (Trade, Technology & Economic Development): PRO: Bill Robinson; Doug Versteeg, Alaska Airlines; Pat Jones, Washington Public Ports Association; Don Meyer, Port of Tacoma

TESTIMONY FOR (Ways & Means):

The creation of this office represents an opportunity for the state to access the large Russian market. State action is required very soon, otherwise the window of opportunity will be lost. Other nations have already established a trade office in the Russia Far East. This office will be beneficial to the state as it will assist business access to this abundant market.

TESTIMONY AGAINST (Ways & Means): None

TESTIFIED (Ways & Means): PRO: Senators Bluechel, Rasmussen, Moore; Bill Robinson, private businessman; Steve Odom, Dept. of Trade & Economic Development; Michelle Buckmeyer