

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 5745

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 12, 1993

Brief Description: Creating the PNWER-Net working group.

SPONSORS: Senators Bluechel, Bauer, Skratek, Cantu, Erwin, M. Rasmussen and Sheldon

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Bauer, Chairman; Drew, Vice Chairman; Cantu, Jesernig, Prince, Quigley, Sheldon, and von Reichbauer.

Staff: Scott Huntley (786-7421)

Hearing Dates: February 22, 1993; March 3, 1993

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

BACKGROUND:

In 1991 the Legislature enacted the Pacific Northwest Economic Region agreement which made this state a member along with Oregon, Alaska, Idaho, and Montana, and the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia. In entering into this agreement, the Legislature also encouraged the establishment of cooperative activities between the member states and provinces. The member states and provinces now propose to cooperate in electronically sharing 22 million volumes from the libraries of their major universities. The member states and provinces have determined that interlibrary sharing will provide substantial economic and educational benefits.

SUMMARY:

The Pacific Northwest Economic Region-Net (PNWER-Net) is defined as the technology network to be created by the member states and provinces of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region that will be capable of electronically linking certain undergraduate university libraries of the members. The libraries of the University of Washington (UW) and Washington State University (WSU) are designated as the libraries from this state which will be a part of PNWER-Net.

The PNWER-Net working subgroup is created for the member state of Washington. It is composed of seven members, two from the Senate, two from the House of Representatives, the State Librarian, and the primary academic librarian from each of the state's research universities (UW and WSU).

The PNWER-Net subgroup is directed to work with subgroups from other member states and provinces to develop the library network and to assist in developing criteria to ensure that member libraries use existing telecommunications infrastructure including the internet. The subgroup is to report to the Legislature by December 1, 1994 concerning the status of PNWER-Net.

The PNWER-Net account is created in the custody of the State Treasurer. All receipts from appropriations and gifts, grants and donations will be deposited into the account. Expenditures from the account may only be used for the purpose of developing the PNWER-Net system. Funds in the account may be expended only after the PNWER-Net technology is capable of linking the designated libraries between two or more member states or provinces, and at least two member states or provinces have committed to funding linkage to PNWER-Net.

The PNWER-Net subgroup may accept gifts, grants and donations from private sources for the purposes of developing the system. The subgroup is to account for all funds spent from the PNWER-Net account.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested February 11, 1993

TESTIMONY FOR:

By networking the research university libraries in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, students and citizens in this entire area would be able to utilize the resources of all of these facilities. Over 22 million volumes are contained in these libraries, volumes which would be available to the entire region through this network. Library networking is already a topic of interest and action throughout North America. The rising cost of library materials, squeezed library budgets and burgeoning technological capability have led to many efforts to electronically link libraries. Much of the infrastructure to do this is already in place; it only remains to apply this infrastructure to this task.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Senator Bluechel, prime sponsor (pro); John S. Niles, Global Telematics (pro); Frank Dillow, GTE (pro)

HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

Expenditures from the PNWER-Net account may only be authorized by the chair of the Higher Education Coordinating Board, rather than by the PNWER-Net subgroup chair.