

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1245

As Reported By House Committee On:

Trade & Economic Development

Title: An act relating to the business assistance center.

Brief Description: Delaying the termination date of the business assistance center.

Sponsors: Representatives Sheldon, Van Luven, Ballasiotes, Backlund, Hatfield, Schoesler, Conway, D. Schmidt, Sherstad, Radcliff, Wolfe, Morris, Kessler and Basich.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Trade & Economic Development: 1/30/95, 2/6/95 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Van Luven, Chairman; Radcliff, Vice Chairman; D. Schmidt, Vice Chairman; Sheldon, Ranking Minority Member; Veloria, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Ballasiotes; Hatfield; Hickel; Sherstad; Skinner and Valle.

Staff: Kenny Pittman (786-7392).

Background: The Business Assistance Center was established in 1987 to serve as the state's lead agency and advocate for the development and conservation of businesses. In recent years, the Legislature has placed special emphasis on programs that provide export assistance and services to small businesses and minority and women-owned businesses. The Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development is responsible for the administration of the Business Assistance Center.

The Business Assistance Center is responsible for: (1) coordinating the delivery of the state's financial and technical assistance programs to assist businesses in cooperation with local development organizations; (2) providing comprehensive referral services to businesses requiring government assistance; (3) serving as the business ombudsman within state government; (4) assisting state agencies to reduce regulatory costs to small business; (5) working with federal, state and local agencies to ensure that business services and distressed area programs are conducted in a coordinated and cost effective manner; and (6) advising the

Governor and Legislature on methods to increase the effectiveness of the state's business assistance programs.

The Business Assistance Center's powers and duties are scheduled to be terminated on June 30, 1995.

Summary of Bill: The termination date of the Business Assistance Center, within the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, is delayed from June 30, 1995, to June 30, 1999.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: We need to keep the vital services of the Business Assistance Center. They are the focal point of technical and financial assistance to small businesses in the state. Their services have been enhanced since the creation of the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Tim Sheldon, prime sponsor (Pro); and Kathy Norwood-Chance, Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (Pro).