

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1507

As Reported By House Committee On:

Capital Budget

Title: An act relating to heritage capital projects.

Brief Description: Requiring a process to solicit proposals for and prioritize heritage capital projects.

Sponsors: Representatives Ogden, Radcliff, Jacobsen, Brumsickle, Chopp and Dickerson; by request of Washington State Historical Society.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: 2/21/95, 2/28/95 (DPS).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Sehlin, Chairman; Honeyford, Vice Chairman; Ogden, Ranking Minority Member; Chopp, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Costa; Hankins; McMorris; Mitchell; Pennington; Regala; L. Thomas and Valle.

Staff: Karl Herzog, (786-7271)

Background: Two state historical societies are charged with the preservation of materials of historical interest in Washington State: the Washington State Historical Society (WSHS) and the Eastern Washington Historical Society (EWHS). WSHS operates two museums; the State History Museum in Tacoma, and the State Capital Museum in Olympia. EWHS operates the Cheney Cowles Museum and the historic Campbell House in Spokane. Capital projects within these museums are supported by a combination of state appropriations and private contributions.

In addition to the state-chartered historical societies, many community-based public and non-profit entities across the state maintain records, artifacts and sites concerning the heritage and history of the state. Currently, no state grant program exists to support the capital facilities needs of these entities.

Summary of Bill: The Washington State Historical Society (WSHS) must establish a process to solicit and prioritize heritage capital projects for potential funding in the state capital budget. Local governments, public development authorities, nonprofit corporations, tribal governments, and other entities, as determined by WSHS, may apply for funding.

WSHS must adopt rules governing project eligibility and evaluation criteria, recommend a prioritized list of heritage capital projects to the Governor and Legislature by September 1 of each even numbered year, beginning in 1996. The list must be developed through open and public meetings with advice of leaders in the heritage field, including but not limited to the Office of the Secretary of State, the Eastern Washington Historical Society, and the State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. The Governor and Legislature may consider the list when appropriating capital funds for heritage projects beginning with the 1997-99 fiscal biennium.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original: The substitute bill adds the requirements that the list of recommended heritage capital projects be developed through open and public meetings, and that the Office of the Secretary of State, the Eastern Washington Historical Society, and the State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation be involved in establishing the list.

Appropriation: None

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: There are over 600 local organizations that are working to preserve the state's history. Many of these organizations occupy old facilities that require repair and preservation. The bill would bring equity to the state capital funding process for these organizations. The application process would help to raise local support and funds for historical preservation. The list of projects would simply be a recommendation to the legislature.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Val Ogden, prime sponsor; James Britt, Friends of the Fir; Steve Anderson, WA Organization of Museums; Bruce Weilepp, Pacific County Historical Society; Robert Grujhn, King County Landmarks and Heritage Association; David Hanson, State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, CTED, and David Nicandri, WA State Historical Society.