

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6230

As of January 20, 1998

Title: An act relating to creation of a department of cultural resources.

Brief Description: Creating the department of cultural resources.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen, Prince, Patterson, Long, Bauer, Winsley, Spanel, Hale, T. Sheldon, Wood, Newhouse and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 1/29/98.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: Various state agencies and commissions have statutory duties to preserve and foster interest in the state's cultural heritage and artistic endeavors. These duties are among the legions of duties assigned to agencies such as the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (DCTED), resulting in a perception that heritage and arts matters do not receive sufficient budgetary or analytical emphasis.

Likewise, the profiles of the two state historical societies and the Arts Commission, individually, can appear partially eclipsed by the cabinet-level entities competing for recognition and funding.

Summary of Bill: Most of the existing heritage and arts functions of state government are reorganized into one new department.

A 17-person Commission of Cultural Resources is created and is required to develop a strategic plan to achieve a comprehensive, statewide heritage and arts program. The Department of Cultural Resources is created, the director of which is charged with implementing the commission's strategic plan.

All documents, tangible property, funds, appropriations and employees relating to the heritage and arts functions of the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation housed in DCTED; the Washington State Historical Society (WSHS); the Eastern Washington State Historical Society (EWSHS); and the Arts Commission are transferred to the Department of Cultural Resources.

The existing statutes pertaining to these transferred state entities are recodified into the chapter of the Washington laws that contain the statutory provisions for the new Department of Cultural Resources. With one exception, no changes are made in the composition or operation of the transferred entities. The only exception is substitution of the Director of

the Department of Cultural Resources for the Governor as the administrative head to which reports must be made and from which direction must be taken.

The Director of the Department of Cultural Resources is appointed by the Governor from three candidates nominated by the Commission of Cultural Resources.

The chair of the Cultural Resources Commission is selected by the commission from the eight citizen members appointed by the Governor. The four legislative members come equally from each major caucus of each house and are appointed by the leadership of their respective houses. The Boards of EWSHS and WSHS must each supply a member to the commission. One member must come from and be selected by each of the Washington State Arts Commission and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, respectively. The last member of the 17-member commission is the director of the Department of Cultural Resources who serves as an ex officio, nonvoting member.

A majority vote of the membership of the commission is required for the commission to take action.

The organizational structure of the Department of Cultural Resources is limited to the director and a deputy director appointed by the director. The initial subdivisions of the department are a division of administration, a division of museums and a division of community services. These divisions are subject to change at the discretion of the director. The director is given authority to delegate his or her powers and duties and to exercise the Governor's authority to appoint advisory committees and councils.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 19, 1998.

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