

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2207

As Passed House:

March 10, 1999

Title: An act relating to increasing legislative membership on commissions.

Brief Description: Increasing legislative commission membership.

Sponsors: Representatives Kessler and Lisk.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 3/2/99 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/10/99, 94-0.

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Expands legislative membership to include each major party from each chamber on three commissions.
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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives McMorris, Republican Co-Chair; Romero, Democratic Co-Chair; Campbell, Republican Vice Chair; Miloscia, Democratic Vice Chair; Dunshee; Haigh; Lambert and D. Schmidt.

Staff: Scott MacColl (786-7106).

Background:

The Washington Arts Commission consists of 19 members appointed by the Governor, and two members of the Legislature, one from each chamber, from opposing parties.

The Washington State Information Services Board is composed of 13 members, including two members of the Legislature, one member from each chamber, from opposing parties.

The Puget Sound Council is composed of nine members including two members of the Legislature, and one member from each chamber, from opposing parties.

Summary of Bill:

Two members from the Legislature are added to each entity. Of the four legislative members, two must come from each chamber, one from each major party caucus, appointed by the Speaker of the House, and the President of the Senate, respectively.

Two additional members are added to the Washington State Arts Commission, to be appointed by the Governor, for a total of 23 members.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill would take appointments to these commissions out of the political realm. These commissions are non-partisan, and it shouldn't matter which party is represented on commissions. For people who are interested in the issues that come before the commissions, a bipartisan approach to each committee is appreciated. This would only enhance the work of the commissions. The legislators who currently sit on the commissions are supported and valued by the staff and other members, and another two members could only enhance this.

(With concerns) The two legislative members on the commission are an important piece of the work. However, the commission has recently looked at decreasing the membership because they have had problems getting enough members to reach a quorum. Also, the budget for commission members travel expenses is already overspent, although there is a political advantage to having bipartisan support. Two additional members appointed by the Governor would increase the expenses budget.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Lisk, Prime Sponsor; Representative Kessler, co-sponsor; Denise Clifford, Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team; and Kris Tucker, Washington State Arts Commission.