

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5348

As Passed Senate, February 26, 1999

Title: An act relating to the membership and responsibilities of the state library commission.

Brief Description: Reorganizing the state library commission.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on State & Local Government (originally sponsored by Senators Gardner, Horn and Spanel; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Washington State Library Commission).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 2/1/99, 2/4/99 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 2/26/99, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5348 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Horn, Kline and McCaslin.

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: The State Library is established as a state agency and mandated to have a facility on the state capitol campus grounds.

Among other responsibilities, the State Library: (1) provides library and other information services to members of the Legislature, state officials, and state employees in connection with their official duties; (2) acquires materials that pertain to the history of the state; (3) serves as a depository for newspapers published in the state; (4) promotes and facilitates electronic access to public information and services; (5) provides advisory services to state agencies on their information needs; (6) provides library and information services to persons throughout the state who are blind or physically handicapped; (7) assists libraries and persons around the state to establish and develop library services; (8) acts as an interlibrary loan center for libraries in the state; and (9) assists in providing direct library information and services to individuals.

The State Library Commission consists of five members including the Superintendent of Public Instruction, who is the chair of the commission, and four commissioners appointed by the Governor, one of whom is a library trustee when appointed and one of whom is a certified librarian actually engaged in library work when appointed. Commissioners are appointed to four-year terms of office. The State Library Commission sets general policies, proposes budgets, hires the State Librarian, and establishes rules and examinations for persons seeking to be certified as librarians.

Summary of Bill: Statutes relating to the State Library and State Library Commission are revised and reorganized.

It is clarified that the State Library Commission is the governing board of the State Library.

Membership on the State Library Commission is altered no longer to include the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Governor appoints all five commissioners with added requirements for persons who are appointed, beyond the existing requirement that one commissioner must be a certified librarian actively engaged in library work when appointed and another commissioner must be a library trustee when appointed. The appointed commissioner replacing the Superintendent of Public Instruction must be an educator with knowledge of library and information technology policy. One commissioner must be a representative of the legislative branch of state government. One commissioner must be a member of the general public. The commission elects its chair from among its membership.

Provision is made for the staggering of the board members' terms of office. Full terms are increased to five years. The Governor may remove a commissioner for cause.

The duties of the State Library Commission are revised. The commission must monitor agency progress toward its goals and objectives, exert leadership in developing information access and library services, and establish content-related standards for common formats and agency indexes for state-agency produced information. A number of the specific responsibilities of the commission are deleted and the commission is authorized to delegate responsibilities to the State Librarian.

Testing and certification requirements of librarians remain the responsibility of the State Library Commission but are placed into a new section of law.

The express responsibilities of the State Librarian are revised. The State Librarian is responsible to implement policies and delegated authority, acquire library materials, employ and terminate personnel in accordance with civil service laws, enter into agreements with public or private entities to implement the mission and objectives of the State Library, and provide information through electronic means to assist agencies in making their information more readily available to the public. Services may be provided in lieu of monetary reimbursement under agreements with others. The State Library is authorized to charge lending fees to other libraries that charge the State Library for similar services. The duplicate reference to assisting in the provision of direct library and information services to individuals is eliminated.

The authority to provide grants to local libraries for children learn-in-library programs is eliminated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill is an orderly cleanup of the State Library statutes to bring them up to date and into consistency with best modern practices.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Nancy Zussy, State Library; Joan Yoshitomi, OSPI; Steve Duncan, WA Library Assn.