

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2926

As of March 13, 2002

Title: An act relating to a state library.

Brief Description: Transferring the state library to the office of the secretary of state.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Clements and Grant).

Brief History:

Background: The 1853 Organic Act that created the Territory of Washington provided for the establishment of a territorial library, and the State Library was created shortly after statehood. The library's primary mission is serving the government's information needs.

The major functions of the library are:

- providing reference and research support to the Legislature and state government agencies;
- serving as a central depository for current and retrospective collections of state and federal documents, newspapers, and state historical information;
- supporting the establishment, development, and coordination of local library service statewide;
- providing library services to residents and staff of correctional institutions, psychiatric hospitals, and institutions for the developmentally disabled; and
- providing online access to state and local government information.

Legislation enacted in 2000 directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to study the mission, programs, and usage of the State Library. The WSIPP found that the library's mission is sound, but that the ways in which information is delivered to the Legislature and state agencies needed to change significantly. The WSIPP made the following recommendations:

- Accelerate the move from print to online content by joining a larger purchasing unit with the publicly funded academic libraries.
- Focus the library's activities more sharply than they are today. Implementing a limited market system by instituting fees for service would help clarify the relative value of services for users.
- Implement a more aggressive book "weeding" campaign.
- Reduce the physical presence of the library on the capitol campus and develop more appropriate space for technical and service functions elsewhere.

The Governor's proposed 2002 supplemental operating appropriations bill eliminates state support for the operation of the State Library, with the exception of the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library, effective October 1, 2002.

Summary of Bill: The State Library, the State Library Commission and their respective duties are abolished. A state library is established within the Office of the Secretary of State. The governance, including rule making authority, and all employees of the State Library and the State Library Commission are transferred to the Office of the Secretary of State. The state librarian is appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of, the Secretary of State.

The Office of the Secretary of State receives all corresponding assets, tangible property, books, records, files, documents and reports in the possession of the State Library and State Library Commission. The powers, functions and duties are transferred, and all rules and pending business before the State Library and State Library Commission will be continued by the Office of the Secretary of State.

All existing contracts and obligations remain in full force and are performed by the Office of the Secretary of State. Any appropriations made to the State Library and State Library Commission are transferred and credited to the Office of the Secretary of State and will take place on July 1, 2002.

Additional duties are assigned to the state librarian, including establishing content-related standards for state agency produced information; accepting, expending and making applications for grants; and licensing professional librarians.

Any reduction-in-force actions that take place on or before June 30, 2005, only provides layoff rights to positions that were within either of the separate agencies as the agencies existed on June 30, 2002.

Technical changes are made to references to the State Library Commission.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2002.