

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5555

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Economic Development & Telecommunications, February 20, 2001

Title: An act relating to establishing a branch office of the department of community, trade, and economic development in eastern Washington.

Brief Description: Establishing a branch office of the department of community, trade, and economic development in eastern Washington.

Sponsors: Senators Hale and Patterson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Economic Development & Telecommunications: 2/19/01, 2/20/01[DP-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators T. Sheldon, Chair; B. Sheldon, Vice Chair; Fairley, Finkbeiner, Haugen, McCaslin and Stevens.

Staff: Andrea McNamara (786-7483)

Background: The Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) provides a variety of services to communities throughout Washington. It currently operates with two primary divisions, the Office of Community Development which works toward securing the basic needs of viable communities, and the Office of Trade and Economic Development which focuses on creating economic opportunities and strengthening the competitiveness of Washington businesses.

CTED maintains its main agency headquarters in three different locations in Olympia. The International Trade Division is headquartered in Seattle. Presently, CTED provides project-specific services to eastern Washington with four out-stationed staff, including two business financial specialists in Ellensburg and Rice (serving central and northeastern Washington respectively), one program development specialist in Spokane serving community economic development clients in six targeted eastern Washington counties, and one WorkFirst technical specialist based in Kennewick that serves all of Central Washington.

Summary of Bill: Legislative findings are made that services provided by the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) are vital to all regions of the state and that service delivery to eastern Washington would be significantly enhanced by a greater CTED presence there.

CTED must establish a field office and full-time staff presence in eastern Washington as soon as practicable. Colocation with other state agencies in the Tri-Cities area is encouraged. Staffing must be organized in a manner that most efficiently provides improved service to eastern Washington communities.

Program activities and priorities are determined by the Director of CTED in consultation with local government officials, business, labor, and educational advisors from the region.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Eastern Washington is not getting the level of service from CTED that it needs, particularly in the area of economic development which is critical to so many eastern Washington communities. If CTED can maintain international trade offices in several foreign counties, it should be able to support a field office east of the Cascades.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Hale, prime sponsor; Jim Boldt, Boldt/Thatcher (pro).