
**Trade & Economic Development
Committee**

HB 1059

Brief Description: Creating a joint committee on trade policy.

Sponsors: Representatives Veloria, Sump, Grant and Clements.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the joint legislative committee on trade policy.

Hearing Date: 1/31/03

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

Washington's economy relies significantly on international trade. Currently, there are many international agreements and on-going negotiations that could significantly impact Washington's economy, regulations and statutes. Some of the changes could threaten the status quo while others can provide a golden opportunity. Currently, there is no formal role for the Legislature to weigh in on the debate nor any formal and focused legislative audience to focus on such agreements and negotiations.

Summary of Bill:

A joint legislative committee on trade policy is created. The committee will include four senators and four representatives and three ex-officio members. The senators, two from each of the two largest political parties, will be appointed by the President of the Senate. The representative, two from each of the two largest political parties, will be appointed by the Speaker of the House. Vacancies are filled by appointment by the remaining members, and must be filled by the same house and party as the member whose seat is being vacated. The ex-officio members must include representatives from the Department of Agriculture and the Office of the Attorney General as well as the state trade representative.

At least once per year, the joint committee must hear public testimony on the actual impacts of international trade agreements and negotiations on Washington state. They must submit a

report on the public testimony to the state trade representative and the legislature.

The joint committee must maintain active communication with the state trade representative's office, the United States trade representative's office, Washington's congressional delegation, the National Conference of State Legislatures as well as other appropriate groups regarding ongoing developments in international trade agreements and policy.

The joint committee must conduct an annual assessment of the impact of international trade agreements on Washington law and report their findings to the legislature.

Staff support will be provided by Senate Committee Services and the Office of Program Research.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.