

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1167

As Reported by House Committee On:
Trade & Economic Development

Title: An act relating to funding and expenditures for legislative trade hosting and mission activities.

Brief Description: Creating the legislative international trade account.

Sponsors: Representatives Veloria, Roach, Kenney, DeBolt, Eickmeyer, Anderson, Chase and Upthegrove.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Trade & Economic Development: 2/4/03, 2/7/03 [DPS].

<p>Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Creates the Legislative International Trade Account.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Veloria, Chair; Eickmeyer, Vice Chair; Skinner, Ranking Minority Member; McDonald, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, Chase, Condotta, Kristiansen, McCoy, Pettigrew and Priest.

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

The President of the Senate (President) and members of the House of Representatives and the Senate are often involved in international trade hosting and mission activities. Such activities usually involve the exchange of gifts between dignitaries. Currently, there is no government account or funding mechanism established to provide for the costs associated with such activities.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Legislative International Trade Account (Account) is established in the custody of the State Treasurer. Private, nonpublic gifts, grants and endowments will be deposited in this Account.

Expenditures from the Account may only be used for the purpose of trade hosting and trade mission activities in which the President and members of the Senate and House of Representatives are participating in their official capacity.

The Secretary of the Senate or the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives must first approve all requests from individual legislators for use of these funds. Then, the President must approve the actual expenditures from this fund.

The President, state officers and state employees are allowed to solicit charitable gifts, grants or donations for the Account.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute allows for expenditures for international relations activities as well as international hosting and trade mission activities. The substitute bill clarifies that solicitation by the President, state officers and employees are presumed not to be a violation of the solicitation and gift prohibitions, but these individuals are not exempted from the provisions entirely.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Relationships are the key to international trade. Proper protocol is a key element. When hosting foreign dignitaries or visiting foreign leaders, the gift presentations are an integral part to building the relationship. It is the gesture, not so much the gift, that helps solidify a friendship. Currently, some of the costs associated with trade hosting and missions are not covered, but this bill would provide a mechanism to help fund the forging of international relations and trade.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen; Miguel Velasquez, Consulate of Peru; and Jorge Medrano, Consulate of Mexico.

