
**Trade & Economic Development
Committee**

HB 1973

Brief Description: Promoting tourism.

Sponsors: Representatives Veloria, McCoy and Kenney.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Community, Trade & Economic Development, working with the Department of Fish and Wildlife and other appropriate entities, to develop an annual business and marketing plan to promote nature-based tourism in Washington.

Hearing Date: 2/28/03

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

Washington is 68,139 square miles of diverse geography, geology, and climate. The west side of the state has ancient rain forests, miles of Pacific Ocean coastline, some of the state's largest cities and the Space Needle. The east side of the state is traditionally dry and sunny, with a big sky, wide open spaces, farms and ranches. There are also spectacular canyons, gorges and the Grand Coulee Dam. The state is divided by the majestic Cascade mountains. All in all, Washington offers many opportunities for tourists of all interests.

In 2000, over 25.9 million visitors enjoyed Washington State parks. There are also thousands of licensed elk and deer hunters that take advantage of the outdoors. Sport fishermen and sport shellfishers enjoy the salmon, steelhead, and razor clams found in Washington. Wildlife viewing is an increasing industry that generates annually \$1.7 billion and supports 21,000 jobs in this state. In fact, wildlife viewing is the fastest growing outdoor activity and segment of the travel industry. This activity thrives in the rural areas and the opportunities for wildlife viewing primarily occurs on public lands.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Community, Trade & Economic Development is directed to develop, in conjunction with the Department of Fish and Wildlife and other appropriate agencies and organizations, an annual business and marketing plan to promote nature-based tourism in Washington. This includes the coordination of the promotion of nature-based tourism; the promotion of hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing; the creation of partnerships among agencies, organizations, tribes and local communities; the provision of educational materials to minority and local communities about the rules, regulations and recreational opportunities; and the promotion of local industries.

Appropriation: The sum of \$75,000 is appropriated from the State General Fund for fiscal year 2003-04 and the sum of \$75,000 is appropriated from the State General Fund for fiscal year 2004-05.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 24, 2003.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.