
**Trade & Economic Development
Committee**

ESSB 5178

Brief Description: Creating the legislative international trade account.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Commerce & Trade (originally sponsored by Senators Hewitt, T. Sheldon, Rasmussen, Franklin, Shin, Rossi, Hale and B. Sheldon; by request of Lieutenant Governor).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Creates the Legislative International Trade Account.

Hearing Date: 3/20/03

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

The Lieutenant Governor 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 Bill:

The legislative international trade account is created in the custody of the State Treasurer. Only private funds may be deposited in the account. All funds received by the Lieutenant Governor for international trade hosting and trade mission activities must be deposited in the account.

The Lieutenant Governor, state officers, and state employees may accept gifts in excess of \$50 when those gifts are accepted and solicited for deposit in the legislative international trade account. When soliciting donations solely for the legislative international trade account, the Lieutenant Governor, state officers, and state employees are presumed to not be in violation of ethics laws regarding solicitations and gifts.

Expenditures from the account may only be used for international trade hosting and trade mission activities, excluding travel and lodging, in which the Lieutenant Governor, Senators and Representatives participate in an official capacity. Only the Lieutenant Governor may authorize expenditures from the account. If Senators and Representatives want to spend funds from the account, they must first have their request approved by the Secretary of the Senate or the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives, and then they must be granted final approval from the Lieutenant Governor.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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