

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5276

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, February 11, 2003
Ways & Means, March 10, 2003

Title: An act relating to funding and expenditures of the secretary of state.

Brief Description: Funding oral history and archives activities.

Sponsors: Senators Roach, Kastama, Fairley, Stevens, Horn, Hale, Franklin, Kohl-Welles, Parlette, Shin and Winsley; by request of Secretary of State.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/11/03 [DP].
Ways & Means: 3/10/03 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Stevens, Vice Chair; Kastama and McCaslin.

Staff: Ronda Larson (786-7429)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rossi, Chair; Hewitt, Vice Chair; Zarelli, Vice Chair; Brown, Doumit, Fairley, Fraser, Hale, Honeyford, Johnson, Parlette, Poulsen, Regala, Roach, Sheahan, B. Sheldon and Winsley.

Staff: Steve Jones (786-7440)

Background: Among the programs under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State are the Division of Archives and Records Management (Archives Division), the Oral History Program, and the State Library. The Archives Division manages, stores and preserves historical and public records and allows the public to access the records. The Oral History Program records the state's political history by recording and publishing the recollections of legislators, officials, and citizens. The State Library serves as the corporate library for Washington government and works with libraries around the state to provide public access to information.

Currently, state law allows the Secretary of State to accept gifts, grants and conveyances and to spend the proceeds from such gifts subject to the donor's intent and the rules that the Secretary of State has adopted.

A separate statutory law prohibits state officials, employees, and legislators from soliciting or accepting contributions 30 days before and after regular legislative session and during special session, where such contributions would be used for a public office fund, for a candidate committee, or for retiring a campaign debt.

Summary of Bill: The Secretary of State may solicit gifts, grants, and conveyances and sell, lease, exchange, invest, or expend these donations or their income, subject to the donor's intent. The donation proceeds may only go toward:

- conducting oral histories;
- archival activities; and
- state library activities.

An account is created in the state treasury called the oral history, state library, and archives account. The Secretary of State must deposit all donation proceeds into this account. Upon authorization from the Secretary of State, money from the account may only go toward the Oral History Program, the Archives Program, and the State Library Program. An appropriation is not required for expenditure, but the account is subject to allotment procedures.

Persons soliciting or accepting contributions for these programs are exempt from the limitation on soliciting or accepting contributions 30 days before and after regular legislative session and during special session. Also, to solicit and accept gifts in such circumstances is not considered a violation of state ethics laws.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The Oral History Program is an excellent record of some of the major policy issues in this state. The next biennium's budget bill does not include funding for it. We have a long list of people yet to interview who are aged. We are losing the opportunity to interview them with each passing year because they become less lucid. Without this bill, we will never again have a chance to capture the history from many of the people yet to be interviewed. As for the archives program, the more flexible funding allows us to purchase public records of great historical value that had been missing for a long time and then suddenly appear up for auction on the Internet.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Jerry Handfield and Diana Rae Bradrick, Archives Division of the Office of the Secretary of State; Anne Kilgannon and Warren Bishop, Oral History Program of the Office of the Secretary of State; Jeff Wise, Office of the Secretary of State.