

FINAL BILL REPORT

2SSB 5056

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating the department of archaeology and historic preservation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen, Swecker, Prentice, Kastama, Fairley, Honeyford, Zarelli, Hewitt, Berkey, Fraser, Thibaudeau, Jacobsen, McAuliffe, Rasmussen, Kline and Rockefeller).

Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

House Committee on State Government Operations & Accountability

House Committee on Appropriations

Background: The Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) is part of the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED). Within CTED, OAHP is supervised by the assistant director for local government who, in turn, reports to the director of CTED, who in turn, reports to the Governor.

The executive head of the OAHP is the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The title derives from federal law. For a state historic preservation program to be approved by the Secretary of the Interior, the Governor must designate a SHPO to undertake many federal responsibilities, some of which are: to administer the State Historic Preservation Program; to administer the state program of federal assistance for historic preservation within the state; to ensure that historic properties are taken into consideration at all levels of planning and development; and to assist local governments in becoming certified local governments so that they become eligible to receive federal grant money. Once certified, a local government may then also offer state property tax incentives and federal investment tax credits to landowners whose property is listed on the federal, state, or local historic registers.

Another area of federal law that is regulatory in nature is administered by the OAHP. This involves arriving at memoranda of agreement with proponents of development projects that have potential impacts on historical or archaeological sites. The ultimate consequence of inability to arrive at an agreement to mitigate the effects of the project can be the loss of the federal permit required for the project to proceed.

The OAHP also nominates historic places to the State and National Historic Registers; maintains an inventory of both state and nonstate-owned historic properties and archaeological sites that are searchable through the geographic information system of computerized mapping; provides technical assistance and outreach services to local governments, private parties and foundations; and engages in various educational activities, often in conjunction with other state agencies, state universities, states, and federal agencies.

Summary: The OAHP is removed from CTED and made a separate department of state government. The director, who is also the SHPO, is appointed by the Governor, with the consent of the Senate.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 47 2

House 93 5

Effective: July 24, 2005