

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1741

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government & Tribal Affairs

Title: An act relating to the oral history program.

Brief Description: Transferring the oral history program from the secretary of state to the legislature.

Sponsors: Representatives Hunt, Skinner and Conway.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 2/16/07, 2/20/07 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Transfers the Oral History Program to the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives for the purpose of conducting oral histories of current and former members and staff of the Legislature.
- Allows the Secretary of State to conduct oral histories of current and former government officials and employees of government officials.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Green, Kretz, McDermott, Miloscia and Ormsby.

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

The Oral History Program (Program) is administered by the Secretary of State (Secretary) at the direction of an Oral History Advisory Committee (Committee). The purpose of the Program is to record and document oral histories of current and former members and staff of

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the Legislature, current and former state government officials and personnel, and other citizens who have participated in the political history of the state.

The Committee consists of four members of the House of Representatives, two from each major caucus; four members from the Senate, two from each major caucus; the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives; the Secretary of the Senate; and the Secretary of State. The Committee selects persons to be interviewed, decides which transcripts should be published, and advises the Secretary on various other processes and program administration. The Secretary must contract with independent oral historians and through the history departments of the state universities for conducting and recording the interviews. Transcripts and photographs may be published for distribution to libraries and for sale to the public.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Program is transferred to the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives (Chief Clerk) and is modified for the purpose of conducting oral histories of current and former members and staff of the Legislature and other citizens who have participated in the political history of the state. The Secretary of State may conduct oral histories of current and former state government officials and personnel, and other citizens who have participated in the political history of the state. In the event a candidate for interview occupied positions in multiple branches of government, the interview shall be conducted according to the last position held by the candidate, except that the person being interviewed may select which entity he or she wishes to prepare his or her oral history.

The Committee maintains its current function of selecting persons to be interviewed, deciding which transcripts should be published, and advising the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk on various other program processes. Ex officio members may be appointed by a majority vote of the committee's members, and the chair of the committee shall be a legislator and shall be elected by a majority vote of the committee members.

An Oral History Account (account) is created in the custody of the State Treasurer and expenditures from the account may only be made for purposes of the Program and may only be authorized by the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk or their designees. The Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk may solicit and accept donations for purposes of conducting oral histories.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill allows that a person who has served in two or more branches of government may select the entity he or she prefers to do his or her oral history. The Oral History Advisory Committee will advise both programs by selecting persons to be interviewed, deciding which transcripts should be published, and advising on various other processes. Ex officio members may be appointed by a majority vote of the committee's members, and the chair of the committee shall be a legislator and shall be elected by a majority vote of the committee members.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Secretary of State needs the authority to continue to raise funds to offer the program. This is a work in progress. Oral histories are an important tool that allow us to pass information on to future generations. Right now, we are not capturing enough of these histories. This bill will allow two tracks to collect these histories.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Hunt, prime sponsor; and Shane Hamlin, Office of the Secretary of State.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.