

HB 1276 - DIGEST

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 1ST SUB)

Creates the Washington tourism commission.

Requires the commission to pursue a coordinated program to expand the tourism industry throughout the state in cooperation with the public and private tourism development organizations. The commission shall develop and approve, and update as necessary, a six-year strategic plan that includes, but is not limited to: (1) Promoting Washington as a tourism destination to national and international markets to include nature-based and wildlife viewing tourism;

(2) Providing information to businesses and local communities on tourism opportunities that could expand local revenues;

(3) Assisting local communities to strengthen their tourism partnerships, including their relationships with state and local agencies;

(4) Providing leadership training and assistance to local communities to facilitate the development and implementation of local tourism plans; and

(5) Coordinating the development of a statewide tourism marketing plan that must be adopted by March 31, 2008, and every two years thereafter. If the commission does not adopt a marketing plan by March 31st of even-numbered years, the director has the authority to approve a tourism marketing plan for implementation. The plan shall specifically address mechanisms for: (a) funding national and international marketing and nature-based tourism efforts; (b) interagency cooperation; and (c) integrating the state plan with local tourism plans.

Designates funding mechanisms.

Repeals RCW 43.330.095.