

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5737

As of February 15, 2011

Title: An act relating to economic development through the establishment of an intuitive trade assistance web portal.

Brief Description: Promoting economic development by establishing an intuitive trade assistance web portal.

Sponsors: Senators Kastama and Chase.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Economic Development, Trade & Innovation: 2/16/11.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE & INNOVATION

Staff: Edward Redmond (786-7471)

Background: The Department of Commerce (Commerce) is an executive branch agency tasked, amongst other things, with the responsibility of promoting statewide economic development. Commerce engages in a variety of activities to achieve this objective such as providing trade assistance to Washington-based businesses to increase their international competitiveness. Such trade assistance includes providing market opportunity assessments, trade leads, and export financing assistance.

In January 2010, President Obama proposed the National Export Initiative (NEI) to double United States exports within the next five years. In June 2010, as a response to the NEI, Governor Gregoire proposed to increase Washington State exports by 30 percent within the same timeframe. There is currently a state initiative to increase exports amongst small and medium-sized businesses that have either not engaged in exporting or have only exported to a limited number of foreign countries.

Summary of Bill: Commerce must develop and maintain an intuitive trade website, including any associated software, for the purpose of assisting Washington-based companies promote and trade their goods and services internationally. Commerce must select a private information technology and software company to develop the website. The cost of developing the website is not funded by the state; instead, the selected company has the right to commercialize and license the proprietary technology once it has successfully been developed.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Commerce must collaborate with public and private entities to acquire relevant trade data for inclusion on the website. Such data must include, but is not limited to, current regulatory information regarding trade and foreign direct investment; trade leads from foreign trade representatives; and available export financing assistance. Commerce must also field test the website to improve the end-user experience; promote the website domestically and internationally, and report to the Legislature on the impacts the website is having on state trade.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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