

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6405

As of January 27, 2012

Title: An act relating to the Washington service corps.

Brief Description: Concerning the Washington service corps.

Sponsors: Senators Hargrove and Frockt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Economic Development, Trade & Innovation: 1/30/12.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE & INNOVATION

Staff: Jack Brummel (786-7428)

Background: During the great depression, public work relief programs, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps, provided employment and training to thousands who had difficulty finding jobs. The tradition of such job programs has continued in Washington with the Washington Conservation Corps and the Washington Service Corps (WSC).

WSC was created by the Legislature in 1983. The Department of Employment Security administers the program. WSC provides unemployed and out-of-school youth, between 18 and 26 years of age, with temporary jobs that benefit the youth's local community. The goal of the program is to enhance the employability of these youth while addressing unmet local community needs. Efforts to enroll economically, socially, physically, or educationally disadvantaged youth are required.

Participants serve for 11 months and receive a stipend, health insurance, training, and eligibility for a scholarship if the participant completes the full 11 months. The scholarship is equivalent to two-year's tuition at a community or technical college. The program allows for a six-month extension of service.

Sixty percent of the general funds available to the service corps program are earmarked for enrollees from distressed areas and for projects in distressed areas.

The Art in Public Places program, or the 1/2 of 1% for Art program, was established by the Legislature in July 1974. The program is funded from the state's capital construction budget. One-half of 1 percent of construction budgets for state-owned buildings is added for the

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acquisition of artwork. The 1/2 of 1% for Art program for state agencies and public schools applies only to new construction. The 1/2 of 1% for Art program for universities and colleges, in addition to new construction, includes renovation projects exceeding \$200,000. Fifteen percent of each percent for art allocation is used for administrative costs.

Summary of Bill: All state agencies must allocate, out of monies appropriated for construction of a public building, one-half of 1 percent of the appropriation to WSC. WSC is expanded to provide employment opportunities and its other services to the unemployed. Cities and counties are specifically authorized to be supervising agencies which develop service projects.

The Director of WSC must prioritize the distribution of the one-half of 1 percent allocated to WSC to counties in the following order: (1) rural counties with unemployment rates more than 20 percent above the state average; (2) rural counties with unemployment rates between 5 percent and 20 percent above the state average; (3) all other rural counties; (4) nonrural counties with unemployment rates more than 20 percent above the state average; and (5) all other nonrural counties.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 23, 2012.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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