
**Community Development, Housing &
Tribal Affairs Committee**

HB 2229

Brief Description: Concerning long-term funding for a state tourism marketing program.

Sponsors: Representatives Morris, Smith, Appleton, Haler, Moscoso, Tarleton, Roberts, Ryu, Habib and Bergquist.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Washington Tourism Alliance to propose a mechanism to privately fund a state tourism marketing program.

Hearing Date: 1/21/14

Staff: Sean Flynn (786-7124).

Background:

The State Tourism Commission (Commission) was created in 2007 to direct the state tourism program administered through the Department of Commerce. The Commission was comprised of public and private industry representatives and was directed to promote and expand the state tourism industry. The Commission could raise funds and had its own account.

The Legislature terminated the State Tourism Program and the Commission, at the end of the 2009-2011 biennium. In the same year, the Washington State Tourism Alliance (WTA) was formed to assume official state tourism marketing and promotion activities.

The WTA is a private non-profit organization comprised of members of the state tourism industry. WTA receives funding from its members. Among its activities, the WTA operates a state tourism website, publishes the Official State Tourism Guide, and holds an annual tourism summit.

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.

Summary of Bill:

By December 1, 2014, the WTA must submit a report to the Legislature that includes a proposal to privately fund a state tourism marketing program. The report must include a mechanism for raising funds from the tourism industry as divided into separate sectors. The WTA estimates that a state tourism marketing program will require an initial investment of \$7.5 million, apportioned among each industry sector as follows:

- lodging: \$2,400,000;
- food service: \$2,000,000;
- attractions and entertainment: \$975,000;
- retail: \$1,425,000;
- transportation: \$600,000.

The report must propose the manner in which the amounts allocated to each sector will be collected and administered. The Legislature must direct the Departments of Revenue and Commerce, the State Treasurer and the Secretary of State to assist the WTA in developing a fund collection method.

The proposal must include a governance structure that includes a board consisting primarily of members representing the five industry sectors, and also including destination marketing organizations. Other optional members may include significant donors to state tourism marketing. Board membership must ensure geographic and business diversity. The WTA must make initial board appointments from nominations submitted by statewide trade associations representing each of the five industry sectors.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on 4/1/14.