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**State Government & Tribal Relations  
Committee**

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**E2SSB 5356**

**Brief Description:** Establishing the Washington state LGBTQ commission.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Wilson, C., Randall, Das, Saldaña, Darneille, Pedersen, Lias, Nguyen, Cleveland, Dhingra and Hunt).

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Second Substitute Bill**

- Creates the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) Commission within the Governor's Office, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated.
- Declares June of each year as LGBTQ Pride Month.
- Designates the fourth week in June as a time for people of this state to celebrate the contributions to the state by LGBTQ people in the arts, sciences, commerce, and education.

**Hearing Date:** 3/20/19

**Staff:** Desiree Omli (786-7105).

**Background:**

Every year, during the month of June, various events are held in various jurisdictions to celebrate LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) Pride Month commemorating events that occurred in June 1969 in New York, which began the movement to prohibit discriminatory laws and practices against LGBTQ people. Nationally, President Clinton proclaimed June as Gay and Lesbian Pride Month in 1999 and 2000. President Obama subsequently proclaimed June as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month in 2009 and for the next five years.

**Summary of Bill:**

LGBTQ Commission Created.

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*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.*

The Washington State LGBTQ Commission (Commission) is established in the Office of the Governor. The Commission is administered by an executive director who is appointed by the Governor, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this purpose.

The Commission consists of 15 members appointed by the Governor who must consider nominations for membership based upon maintaining a balanced and diverse distribution of race and ethnic, geographic, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, and occupational representation. Of the members who are initially appointed, five serve for one year, five serve for two years, and five serve for three years. Subsequently, all members will serve for three years.

#### Executive Director Duties.

The executive director must:

- hire staff for the Commission;
- monitor state legislation affecting LGBTQ people;
- work with agencies to assess relevant programs and policies,
- coordinate with other state commissions to address issues of mutual concern; and
- work as a liaison between the public and private sector to eliminate barriers to economic and health equity for LGBTQ people.
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#### LGBTQ Commission Duties.

The Commission must:

- recruit and maintain a list of names of qualified LGBTQ people to fill vacancies on various boards and commissions;
- provide a clearinghouse for information regarding relevant state and federal legislation;
- identify and define specific needs of LGBTQ people of color, people with developmental disabilities, seniors, people experiencing homelessness, economic and small business development, and veterans (as well as their spouses and dependents);
- consult with state agencies on the impact of policies, procedures, practices, laws, and administrative rules on the unique problems and needs of LGBTQ people;
- provide data, input, and recommendations to state agencies on proposed agency rules and the development and implementation of comprehensive and coordinated policies, plans, and programs focusing on the unique problems and needs to LGBTQ people;
- provide resource and referral information to agencies and the public;
- consult with nonprofit organizations;
- hold public hearings to gather input on issues related to the unique problems and needs of LGBTQ people;
- advocate for removal of legal and social barriers for LGBTQ people; and
- review best practices for discrimination and harassment policies as well as training.

The Commission must submit a report to the Legislature and the Governor every two years detailing the Commission's activities. Specifically, the report must include the following:

- recommendations for addressing the needs of LGBTQ people of color, people with developmental disabilities, seniors, people experiencing homelessness, economic and small business development, and veterans (as well as their spouses and dependents);
- input received during public hearings and recommendations discussed at the public hearings; and

- recommendations for preserving the memory and contributions of LGBTQ individuals in the state who were lost to HIV/AIDS.

State agencies must provide appropriate and reasonable assistance to the Commission, including providing notice of agency proposed rulemaking and gathering data and information.

LGBTQ Commission Powers.

The Commission may:

- receive gifts, grants, and endowments from public or private sources made for the use or benefit of the Commission;
- establish relationships with public and private institutions, local governments, private industry, community organizations, and other segments of the public to promote equal opportunity for LGBTQ people; and
- adopt rules.

Other.

June of each year is declared by the Legislature to be LGBTQ Pride Month, and the fourth week in June is declared as a time to celebrate the contributions to the state by LGBTQ people in the arts, sciences, commerce, and education. The Legislature also declares that educational institutions, public entities, and private organizations are encouraged to designate time for appropriate activities in commemoration of the lives, history, achievements, and contributions of LGBTQ people.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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