
State Government & Tribal Relations Committee

SB 5705

Brief Description: Concerning the administration of the legislative committee on economic development and international relations.

Sponsors: Senators Stanford, Dozier and Hasegawa.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases membership of the Legislative Committee on Economic Development and International Relations (Committee) from 12 to 16 legislators.
- Removes the prohibition on reimbursing travel and lodging expenses from the Legislative International Trade Account.
- Repeals the process for Committee members to be reimbursed for expenses via vouchers drawn on legislatively appropriated funds.

Hearing Date: 3/14/23

Staff: Jason Zolle (786-7124).

Background:

The Legislative Committee on Economic Development and International Relations.

In 1985 the state established the Legislative Committee on Economic Development (Committee) to keep the Legislature involved in state economic development. "International Relations" was added to the Committee's name and jurisdiction in 2003. The Committee is authorized to study and review economic development issues with special emphasis on international trade, tourism, investment, and industrial development; and to assist the Legislature in developing a

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comprehensive and consistent economic development policy. For example, the Committee may evaluate existing state policies, laws, and programs that promote or affect economic development to determine their cost-effectiveness, and it may monitor economic trends and develop state responses for the Legislature to review.

The Committee is required to cooperate, act, and function with legislative committees, executive agencies, similar councils or committees of other states, and interstate research organizations.

Committee Membership.

The Committee consists of six senators and six representatives, with the Lieutenant Governor serving as chair. No more than three members from each chamber of the Legislature can be from the same political party.

International Relations Expenditures.

A Legislative International Trade Account (Account) exists in the custody of the State Treasurer. Nonpublic gifts, grants, and endowments received by the Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of State for the purposes of international trade hosting, international relations, and international missions activities must be deposited in the Account. Contributions to the Account are limited to \$5,000 per person or entity per year. The Account is nonappropriated, and expenditures may be used only for the purposes of international trade hosting, international relations, and international trade mission activities in which the Lieutenant Governor, the Secretary of State, and legislators participate in an official capacity. Expenditures may not be used for travel and lodging.

Expenses incurred by the Committee must be paid using voucher forms as provided by the state auditor and signed by Committee leadership. Vouchers may be drawn from funds appropriated generally by the Legislature for legislative expenses or from any special appropriation which may be provided by the Legislature for the expenses of the committee.

Summary of Bill:

Changes to the Committee.

The Committee membership is expanded to eight senators and eight representatives, with no more than four from each chamber being of the same political party.

The list of entities with which the Committee must cooperate is expanded to include: (1) similar councils or committees of provinces and territories of Canada and (2) foreign consuls.

The process for Committee members to be reimbursed via vouchers drawn on legislatively appropriated funds is repealed.

Changes to the Account.

The prohibition on reimbursing travel and lodging expenses from the Account is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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