

February 19, 1997

BILL ANALYSIS

TO: Members, Committee on Trade and Economic Development

FROM: Kenny Pittman, Research Analyst (786-7392)

RE: **HB 1888 « Creating the executive-legislative task force  
on international trade.**

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**BACKGROUND:**

International trade is key to Washington's economy. Washington's international business relationships are based on two-way trade, investment, and tourism. In 1994, Washington's two-way trade totaled \$75.4 billion, with exports at \$32.3 billion of the total. In 1992, foreign investors owned approximately 275 businesses that employed 25,355 people in Washington. In 1994, approximately 2.3 million international travelers visited Washington. It is estimated that one in five jobs in Washington is related to international trade.

Washington's international trade programs are administered by the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development and the Washington State Department of Agriculture. These state agencies administer programs that focus on improving the competitive position of key industries and firms in the domestic and international marketplace. This is accomplished by linking the efforts of trade and industry specialist, providing technical staff to assist Washington's small and medium-sized firms develop and expand markets for their products, and maintaining information on potential international trade opportunities through the state's foreign trade offices.

**SUMMARY:**

The Executive-Legislative Task Force on International Trade (Task Force) is created. The Task Force consists of 19 members with representation from public and private sector businesses and organizations involved in international and domestic trade. The Task Force members include: (1) the Governor; (2) Four members

of the Legislature, two from the House of representatives and two from the Senate; (3) Four representatives from businesses involved in international trade; (4) Three representatives of labor; (5) Two representatives from public ports; (6) Two representatives from local economic development organizations; and (7) One representative at large. The Governor appoints the nonlegislative members of the Task Force. The Governor serves as chair of the Task Force and the chair of the House Committee on Trade and Economic Development serves as the vice-chair of the Task Force.

The Task Force is authorized to: (1) review existing state programs and incentives designed to encourage trade opportunities; (2) review the state's organizational structure for trade-related functions; (3) review trade promotion programs, organizational structure, and efforts in other states and countries; (4) make recommendations on the state's trade related functions, including the role of the state in promoting trade and the appropriate organizational structure of the state's trade programs and incentives; and (5) prepare and submit a report to the Governor and appropriate legislative committees with its findings and recommendations by January 30, 1998.

The Governor's Office and the Legislature provides administrative and clerical assistance to the Task Force.

The Task Force may accept gifts, grants, or endowments from public and private sources to be used for the purposes of the Task Force.

The Task Force expires March 1, 1998.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 11, 1997.

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