

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6015

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As of February 19, 2009

**Title:** An act relating to the director of commercialization and innovation within the office of the governor.

**Brief Description:** Establishing the director of commercialization and innovation within the office of the governor.

**Sponsors:** Senators Murray, Delvin and Marr.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Economic Development, Trade & Innovation: 2/19/09.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE & INNOVATION

**Staff:** Philip Brady (786-7460)

**Background:** Washington has a number of programs and entities directed at the creation of new technologies and the encouragement of commercialization, both in the life sciences and general technology. Examples include the Washington Technology Center, the Life Sciences Discovery Fund, high tech research and development tax credits, and UW TechTransfer.

Multiple agencies also have jurisdiction over parts of innovation and commercialization, including the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development; the Higher Education Coordinating Board; the Workforce Training Board; the Economic Development Commission; and the Department of Revenue. Advocates have suggested that these agencies may inadvertently work at cross purposes.

**Summary of Bill:** The Director of Commercialization and Innovation (director) is created within the Office of the Governor. The director has a number of duties dealing with life sciences and technology, including liaising between communities, government, and business; enhancing commercialization and innovation strategies; monitoring and coordinating state efforts, particularly between agencies; managing and leading Washington's overall innovation and commercialization strategy; and providing metrics and measurements of success.

The director must report to the Governor and the Legislature annually, with an initial report due December 1, 2009.

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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.*

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 18, 2009.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This is a good way to start recovery while we wait for a new Department of Commerce. A director of commercialization and innovation would help ensure Washington remains a leader in innovation. The next ten years will be an explosion of information technology and communications, and Washington should be a leader. Washington already leads in many areas, but there is room to grow. This will support that growth by leveraging potential and supporting innovative people. Information technology employs 330,000 and life sciences 20,000. Innovation drives the Washington economy. While existing agencies are doing good things, it would be good to have a single coordinator.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Murray, prime sponsor; Chris Rivera, Patt McKinnell Davis, Washington Biotechnology and Biomedical Association; Lew McMurrin, Washington Technology Industry Association.