

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2583

---

**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs  
General Government & Information Technology

**Title:** An act relating to authorizing specified local governments to designate a portion of their territory as a creative district subject to certification by the Washington arts commission.

**Brief Description:** Authorizing specified local governments to designate a portion of their territory as a creative district subject to certification by the Washington arts commission.

**Sponsors:** Representatives McBride, Haler, Zeiger, Stambaugh, Moscoso, Bergquist, Fitzgibbon, Peterson, Van De Wege, Springer, Santos, Goodman, Hickel and Tharinger.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs: 1/25/16, 1/28/16 [DPS];  
General Government & Information Technology: 2/5/16 [DPS(CDHT)].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Authorizes the Washington Arts Commission to certify creative districts designated by local governments as areas that promote cultural facilities, creative industries, or arts-related businesses.

---

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING & TRIBAL AFFAIRS**

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Ryu, Chair; Robinson, Vice Chair; Zeiger, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Hickel and Sawyer.

**Minority Report:** Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Wilson, Ranking Minority Member.

**Staff:** Sean Flynn (786-7124).

**Background:**

---

*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 Arts Commission (Commission) was established to promote the conservation and development of the state's artistic resources that contribute to the quality of life and general welfare of the state's citizens. The Commission is composed of 19 members appointed by the Governor and four members of the Legislature.

The Commission has a broad authority to sponsor and administer activities or programs related to the growth and development of the arts and humanities, and assist any private or public agency, or person in such pursuits. The Commission administers the state's public arts collection and the Washington State Poet Laureate program.

---

**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The Commission may certify a creative district that includes an area designated by a city or county containing a hub of cultural facilities, creative industries, or arts-related businesses. The creative district must be:

- contiguous;
- distinguished by artistic and cultural resources involving economic and cultural development; and
- engaged and contributing to the community arts and culture.

The Commission may require additional eligibility criteria at its discretion. A creative district also may include vacant property in proximity to the artistic activities that is suitable for similar development.

The city or county seeking certification of a creative district must submit an application for review by the Commission. The Commission may approve or reject the application, and include terms and conditions upon approval. The Commission may revoke certification for a city or county's failure to comply with the conditions of approval.

A Commission employee is designated to administer the creative district certification program, including reviewing applications, developing policies and standards, and overseeing compliance. The coordinator also identifies public and private resources and incentives to support and enhance development within the districts. The Commission may offer incentives to a certified creative district to encourage business, facilitate connections to state economic development assistance, and provide technical assistance, among other resources.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill includes a legislative finding that creative districts promote and improve communities by providing affordable workspace housing for artists.

---

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Arts activities can generate economic stimulus, help to draw in people within a community, and revitalize downtown areas. The arts industry generates billions of dollars of revenue in the state. The program will provide expert administrative assistance for local governments to establish and develop a creative district. Artistic activities have the ability to create economic stimulation. There is interest in local communities to develop the arts. This bill is based on a Colorado program. The bill should also include promoting housing available for artists in creative districts.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative McBride, prime sponsor; Representative Haler; Marilyn Vogler; and Doug Levy, Western States Art Federation.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.

---

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT & INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY**

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill by Committee on Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Kuderer, Vice Chair; MacEwen, Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Morris and Senn.

**Staff:** Lily Sobolik (786-7157).

**Summary of Recommendation of Committee On General Government & Information  
Technology Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Community  
Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs:**

No new changes were recommended.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This bill would empower communities across the state to capitalize on assets, or create or expand assets to increase both the local quality of life and economic development opportunities. It is based on a Colorado model.

The Arts Commission is drafting a resolution to endorse this bill. The arts community is a significant part of local economies, job and wage growth, and downtown revitalization including during the recession. It is a tool for workforce diversification and a vibrant local economy. Arts centers are catalysts; they draw new visitors, enable communities to leverage funds and support the legitimacy and livelihood of artists.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Frank Video, Washington State Arts Commission; Michael Cade, Executive Director Thurston Economic Development Council; Doug Levy, Western States Arts Federation; Stephanie Johnson, Olympia Parks, Arts and Recreation; and Representative McBride.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.