

March 24, 1997

**BILL ANALYSIS**

TO: Members, Committee on Trade and Economic Development

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

**.RE: ESSB 5303 - Creating a task force on tourism promotion and development.**

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**BACKGROUND:**

Tourism is one of Washington's major industries. The state Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (DCTED), through the Tourism Development Program, works with the travel industry to increase tourism in the state. The state's core strategy is to increase off-season travel and travel to under visited, largely rural areas of the state by stimulating demand and helping businesses and communities take advantage of that increased demand.

The tourism and travel-related services provided by the DCTED includes an advertising campaign designed to stimulate consumer demand and new spending, a tourism public relations program designed to promote off-season travel opportunities, a travel trade marketing program to help tour operators develop and market Washington, and a product development program to give tourism businesses in targeted rural communities help in marketing their area. Despite the state's efforts in tourism promotion, many representatives of the tourism industry have expressed the need for a mechanism to coordinate public and private tourism promotion and development efforts.

**SUMMARY:**

A Task Force on Tourism Promotion and Marketing is created to study tourism promotion and related issues related to the establishment of a private commission to market Washington state and its tourism advantage. The task force consist of 16-members with representation from public and private sector organizations involved in travel and tourism that includes four members of the Legislature, nine private sector representatives of the travel and tourism industry, and three ex officio members.

The Governor must appoint the private sector representatives based on recommendations from the private sector organizations. The Speaker appoints the members from the House of Representatives and the lieutenant governor appoints the members from the Senate. The ex officio members consists of director of the DCTED's Tourism Development Division, the director of the state Parks and Recreation Commission, and a representative of the Attorney General's Office.

The task force may create working groups to focus on specific issues in the tourism industry. The task force members serve without compensation, but are reimbursed for travel expenses.

The task force, or its working group, is authorized to study tourism promotion and related issues. The report must include: (1) an evaluation of existing state laws, policies, and programs that promote or affect state tourism marketing; (2) an analysis of the level of state interdepartmental cooperation needed for tourism promotion; (3) a clear determination of the economic impact of an aggressive state-wide tourism marketing program; (4) the development of a legislatively established private state-wide tourism commission; (5) a proposal for private sector funding of the state-wide tourism commission; (6) the commission's procedure to develop a state-wide marketing plan; and (7) recommendations on the appropriate roles and responsibilities of the public and private sectors, including the interrelationship between the state tourism division and the proposed commission.

The DCTED provides necessary staff support to the task force.

The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature by January 31, 1998. The task force expires June 30, 1998.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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