

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1925

As Reported by House Committee On:
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to local government records.

Brief Description: Funding local records management.

Sponsors: Representatives H. Sommers, Sehlin, Romero, Wood and Schindler; by request of Secretary of State.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/19/01, 3/6/01 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Removes the sunset clause on a \$1 surcharge that applies to documents filed with county auditors.
- Authorizes the Secretary of State to spend up to \$400,000 per biennium to provide records management training and competitive grants for local governments if funds are available.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 31 members: Representatives Sehlin, Republican Co-Chair; H. Sommers, Democratic Co-Chair; Barlean, Republican Vice Chair; Doumit, Democratic Vice Chair; Lisk, Republican Vice Chair; Alexander, Benson, Boldt, Buck, Clements, Cody, Cox, Dunshee, Fromhold, Grant, Kagi, Keiser, Kenney, Kessler, Lambert, Linville, Mastin, McIntire, Mulliken, Pearson, Pflug, Ruderman, D. Schmidt, Schual-Berke, Talcott and Tokuda.

Staff: Linda Brooks (786-7153).

Background:

The Secretary of State, through the Division of Archives and Records Management,

provides for the preservation and storage of the official records of state agencies and local governments.

Historical records of state government are collected, preserved, and made available at the archives' main Olympia office. Historical records of local governments are collected, preserved, and made available at five regional branch archive facilities. The regional branch archive facilities are located in Bellevue, Bellingham, Cheney, Ellensburg, and Olympia.

Local Funding

Two revenue sources fund the Secretary of State's records management and archive services for local governments' records. One revenue source is a \$20 surcharge that applies to the filing of unpaid tax warrants in superior courts. The other revenue source is a \$1 surcharge that applies to each document filed with county auditors. This \$1 surcharge is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2001.

A committee of local government officials advises the Secretary of State on the local government archives and records management program.

Competitive Grants Program

The Secretary of State does not award grants on a competitive basis to local governments for records management and archive projects.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Local Funding

The \$1 surcharge on each document filed with the county auditor continues and is made permanent.

Competitive Grants Program

The Secretary of State is authorized to spend up to \$400,000 per biennium on records management training and competitive grants for local governments. Funding for the local government records management training and competitive grants comes from any revenue surpluses associated with the \$20 tax warrant and the \$1 surcharge fees that are used by the Secretary of State to pay for records management and archive services provided to local governments.

The local government committee that advises the Secretary of State on the local government archives and records management program is responsible for reviewing and ranking grant applications. Subject to the availability of funds, grants are awarded based on the prioritized ranking of applications.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The Secretary of State is permitted to use surplus local funds not only on a competitive grants program but also for a records training program for local governments. The total amount that may be spent on the local competitive grants and training programs is limited to no more than \$400,000 per biennium. Statutory citations are inserted for clarity.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on June 30, 2001.

Testimony For: In 1996 there was a deplorable situation regarding the storage of local records in regional archives. To address the situation, it was actually the county auditors who proposed the \$1 surcharge in 1996. However, a sunset clause was inserted when the \$1 surcharge was created, because no one knew how well it would work. It turns out that it has worked very well. Microfilm containing historical records is being checked and the regional archives are providing some real service to local governments. Therefore, the proposal is to now remove the sunset clause on the \$1 surcharge. Local governments support the sunset removal.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Sam Reed, Secretary of State; Bob Terwilliger, Auditors Association; and Debbie Wilke, Washington Association of County Officials.