

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1839

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government Operations & Accountability

Title: An act relating to creating a women's history consortium.

Brief Description: Creating a women's history consortium.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Kessler, Hankins, Linville, Cody, McDonald, Sommers, Santos, Darneille, Haigh, Schual-Berke, Talcott, Skinner, Clibborn, Morrell, Dickerson, Wallace, Chase, Lantz, Green, Upthegrove, Hasegawa, Kagi and Sells.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government Operations & Accountability: 2/22/05, 3/2/05 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates a women's history consortium under the management of the Washington State Historical Society.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ACCOUNTABILITY

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Green, Vice Chair; Nixon, Ranking Minority Member; Clements, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hunt, McDermott, Miloscia and Schindler.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Sump.

Staff: Hannah Lidman (786-7291).

Background:

The Washington State Historical Society

The Washington State Historical Society (Society) is one of two historical societies that act as trustees for the state to maintain and preserve articles and properties that illustrate the history of the state. The Society is required to establish a comprehensive and consistent statewide policy for historical matters, statewide coordination of historical programs, and a coordinated budget for all state historical agencies. The Society also has authority over the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Advisory Committee, which coordinates and provides guidance to the state's observance of the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Women's Suffrage

Women in Washington were guaranteed the right to vote when the Fifth Amendment to the State Constitution was adopted in 1910.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Women's History Consortium (Consortium) is created with the Society as the managing agency. On behalf of the Consortium, the Society must:

- direct and supervise administrative and clerical functions;
- include budgetary requests within the Society's departmental budget;
- collect and deposit all nonappropriated revenues;
- provide staff support;
- print and disseminate notices, rules and orders adopted; and
- provide or allocate office space.

The Consortium is managed by a board of advisors consisting of 15 members: 11 members are appointed by the Governor; two senators, one from each caucus, are appointed by the President of the Senate; and two representatives, one from each caucus, are appointed by the Speaker of the House. The board of advisors must be appointed by September 30, 2005. The responsibilities of the board include:

- management, planning and oversight of organizational and fiscal activities;
- adoption of Consortium membership criteria and procedures;
- identification of long and short-term priorities;
- appointment of special committees and task forces; and
- development of recommendations for the commemoration of the women's suffrage centennial.

Within available resources, the Consortium is responsible for:

- compiling and making available a comprehensive index of materials;
- identifying publicly unrepresented or inaccessible topics, historical periods, or materials and developing strategies for public availability; including topics related to the accomplishments of mothers;
- encouraging collection and preservation of historically relevant materials;
- referring potential material donors and developing procedures for protection of material donations, loans, leases and purchases;
- encouraging exhibit development, curriculum material development, and public access to women's history information and materials;
- seeking private funding and developing the concept for a grant program; and
- developing a volunteer program.

The board of advisors must provide the appropriate committees of the Legislature with a report by December 1, 2006, on the progress of required activities undertaken by the Consortium and the board of advisors. The report must also include the Consortium needs and plans for the future.

The Consortium must provide the Legislature and the Governor with a report by September 1, 2006, on recommendations for commemoration of the 2010 centennial of adoption of the women's suffrage amendment to the State Constitution.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The topics of motherhood and the accomplishments of mothers in the state are identified as unrepresented topics that the Consortium must develop strategies to promote.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: (In support of original bill) This bill will increase awareness of how much women have accomplished and contributed to Washington and the entire country. Washington is a great example of what women can accomplish. There is currently no effort to compile the history and accomplishments of women in Washington. This legislation will help bring this information into schools and the community.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Kenney, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.