

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1995

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to stewardship of state capitol public and historic facilities.

Brief Description: Concerning historic public facilities.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Capital Budget (originally sponsored by Representatives Lantz, Skinner, Hunt, Moeller and Upthegrove).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Capital Budget: 2/23/05, 2/28/05 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/15/05, 96-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 4/13/05, 47-0.

House Concurred.

Passed House: 4/18/05, 95-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Provides a definition for "state capitol public and historic facilities" in Thurston County.
- Assigns the responsibility for the stewardship, preservation, operation, and maintenance of the public and historic facilities of the state capitol to the Department of General Administration, subject to the policy direction of the State Capitol Committee and the Legislative Buildings Committee as created in SHB 1301.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 26 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Ormsby, Vice Chair; Jarrett, Ranking Minority Member; Hankins, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, Chase, Cox, DeBolt, Ericks, Ericksen, Green, Hasegawa, Holmquist, Kretz, Kristiansen, Lantz, McCune, Moeller, Morrell, Newhouse, O'Brien, Roach, Schual-Berke, Serben, Springer and Strow.

Staff: Susan Howson (786-7142).

Background:

The Department of General Administration (GA) owns and manages a number of public and historic facilities in Thurston County including the state capitol grounds, the Visitor Center, the Governor's Mansion and the public spaces in the Legislative, O'Brien, Cherberg, Pritchard, and Temple of Justice buildings. The state capitol grounds include the main capitol campus, Sylvester Park, Heritage Park, Marathon Park, Centennial Park, Capitol Lake, the Interpretive Center, Deschutes Parkway, and the landscape, memorials, artworks, fountains, streets, sidewalks and lighting in each of these areas. In addition, the GA is responsible for the stewardship of the interior furnishings and finishes at the state capitol, and the historic stone exteriors of buildings such as the Insurance, Dolliver, and old capitol buildings. The GA rents these buildings to state agencies for the delivery of programs and to conduct the state's business.

The directors of the GA and the Office of Financial Management have the statutory authority to determine and establish rates to fund the operation of non-assigned public spaces in Thurston County. While statute does not specifically address what buildings, grounds, or other elements are considered "non-assigned public spaces," the GA has interpreted the law to mean the public and historic facilities of the state capitol, and has taken the lead in planning for and directing the care and maintenance of these places. Currently, a per Thurston County full-time equivalent (FTE) state employee, charge funds for the operations and maintenance of the public and historic facilities.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Public and historic facilities include: (1) The east, west and north capitol campus grounds, Sylvester Park, Heritage Park, Marathon Park, Centennial Park, the Deschutes River Basin commonly known as Capitol Lake, the Interpretive Center, Deschutes Parkway, and the landscape, memorials, artwork, fountains, streets, sidewalks, lighting, and infrastructure in each of these areas; and (2) the public spaces and the historic interior and exterior features of the following buildings: the Visitor Center, the Governor's Mansion, the Legislative Building, the John L. O'Brien Building, the Cherberg Building, the Newhouse Building, the Pritchard Building, the Temple of Justice, the Insurance Building, the Dolliver Building, Capitol Court, and the old capitol buildings, including the historic state-owned furnishings and works of art commissioned for or original to these buildings. Aquatic lands in the Capital Lake area that are managed by the Department of Natural Resources are not included in the definition of "state capitol public and historic facilities."

The GA is responsible for the stewardship, preservation, operation, and maintenance of the public and historic facilities of the state capitol subject to the policy direction of the State Capitol Committee and the Legislative Buildings Committee as created in SHB 1301. In administering this responsibility, the GA is directed to apply the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's standards for the treatment of historic properties.

Funding for the current and future maintenance and operational needs of the public and historic facilities will be authorized in the operating budget from the General Administration Services Account. Funding for development and preservation needs will be authorized in the capital budget from the Capitol Building Construction Account to the extent that revenue is available, or the State Building Construction Account.

The GA is authorized to seek grants, gifts, or donations to support the stewardship of public and historic facilities. In addition, the GA may purchase historic state capitol furnishings and artifacts or sell historic state capitol furnishings and artifacts that have been designated as state surplus by the Capitol Furnishings Preservation Committee.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: (Original bill) As the Legislature has a special obligation to preserve and protect the public and historic facilities of the state capitol for future generations, this bill defines and recognizes the importance of the public and historic facilities program and establishes operational guidelines to preserve and protect these important assets. The bill will assure that as the Department of General Administration maintains, preserves, and improves the state's capitol facilities, they will use the highest standards of excellence and consult with preservation experts. Supporters encouraged adoption of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's standards for the treatment of historic properties and a funding mechanism for the historic preservation on the capitol campus.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Lantz, prime sponsor; Tony Cook, General Administration; Gerry Tayes, Washington State Parks; Ralph Munro, former State Capitol Committee member; Michael Sullivan and Mary Thompson, Washington Trust for Historic Preservation; and Allyson Brooks, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.