

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5020

As of February 1, 2017

Title: An act relating to certain state ethnic and cultural diversity commissions.

Brief Description: Concerning certain state ethnic and cultural diversity commissions.

Sponsors: Senators Hasegawa, Hunt, Keiser and Chase.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government: 1/11/17.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Washington State Commission on African-American Affairs and the Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs to advise the Legislature on issues of concern to their communities.
- Repeals the sunset provision for the Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Staff: Melissa Van Gorkom (786-7491)

Background: The Commission on African-American Affairs (CAAA) was created in 1992.

The Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (CAPAA) was originally established in 1974 as the Washington State Commission on Asian-American Affairs; the title was amended in 1995 to be the CAPAA.

The Commission on Hispanic Affairs (CHA) was originally established in statute in 1971 as the Washington State Commission on Mexican-American Affairs; the title was amended in 1987 to be the CHA. The 1987 legislation established a sunset provision for the CHA originally set for June 30, 1997. The sunset was amended in 1993 to extend the work of the CHA until June 30, 2022.

The duties of all three commissions are outlined in statute. A majority of the duties for the three commissions are similar, such as:

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- examining and defining issues pertaining to the rights and needs of their community, and make recommendations to or advising the Governor and state agencies on changes in programs, policies, and laws;
- establishing relationships with state agencies, local governments, and private sector organizations that promote equal opportunity and benefits for their community; and
- receiving gifts, grants, and endowments from public or private sources that are made for the use or benefit of the commission and expend, without appropriation, the same or any income from the gifts, grants, or endowments according to their terms.

However, under current statute, language regarding the duty of the commissions to advise the Legislature on issues of concern to their communities differs as follows:

- the CAAA is currently required, acting in concert with the Governor, to advise the Legislature on issues of concern to their community;
- the CAPAA is not currently directed by statute to advise the Legislature on issues of concern to their community; and
- the CHA is currently required under statute to advise the Legislature on issues of concern to their community.

Summary of Bill: The CAAA must advise the Legislature on issues of concern to the African-American community.

The CAPAA must advise the Legislature on issues of concern to the Asian Pacific American community.

The sunset provision for the CHA set for June 30, 2022, is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: Established in different times and in different pieces of the code these commissions have different missions. The CAPAA is not currently able to bring issues to the Legislature on behalf of the community. However, the CHA may address the Legislature directly and advise the Legislature on how bills may impact their community and the CAAA can advise the Legislature but must go through the Governor's office. This bill would allow all three commissions to have the same ability to address the Legislature directly. It would also remove the sunset provision which was only applicable to the CHA. Asian Pacific Americans are the fastest-growing population in the state with 48 distinct ethnic groups and this bill would provide the CAPAA with the opportunity to provide the Legislature with information concerning these unique and diverse communities.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Bob Hasegawa, Prime Sponsor; Michael Itti, Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.