

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1147

*As Reported By House Committee on:
State Government*

Title: An act relating to citizen service.

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to citizen service.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Pruitt, Wood, Ogden, Bowman, Anderson, Ferguson, Sprenkle, Jacobsen, Rasmussen and Moyer.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
State Government, February 15, 1991, DPA.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
STATE GOVERNMENT**

Majority Report: *Do pass as amended.* Signed by 9 members: Representatives Anderson, Chair; Pruitt, Vice Chair; McLean, Ranking Minority Member; Bowman, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler; Grant; Moyer; O'Brien; and Sheldon.

Staff: Linda May (786-7135).

Background: In 1982, the Legislature passed the Center for Voluntary Action Act. In so doing, the Legislature expressed an intent to ensure that the state of Washington makes every appropriate effort to encourage individuals to be volunteers.

The Legislature gave the governor the authority to create a statewide Center for Voluntary Action within the Department of Community Development. The center's major task is to work in cooperation with individuals and organizations to further volunteer efforts. Specifically the center is to provide information to volunteers and to organizations using volunteers, sponsor recognition events for outstanding efforts, facilitate the involvement of business, industry, government and labor in community service, organize training programs, publish and distribute schedules of events, review laws and rules to determine their impact on the success of volunteer programs, and provide information about health and social services available to AIDS patients.

The Legislature also established the Washington State Council on Voluntary Action to assist the governor and the center in the accomplishment of its mission. The council advises the governor as the governor requests, and the council proposes, reviews and evaluates activities and programs of the center. The governor appoints members to the council; council composition is fairly loosely defined in existing statute.

Summary of Amended Bill: The intent section of the Center for Voluntary Action Act is expanded to emphasize the value of citizen service in shaping consciously responsible citizens, particularly youth, and to assign to the State a leadership role in fostering citizen service and in coordinating existing service programs.

The duties of the Center for Voluntary Action are expanded. New duties include acting as a liaison among various organizations to coordinate collaborative volunteer efforts, developing a strategic plan to foster citizen service, developing a resource library, developing ways to recognize and reward citizens, initiating pilot projects for citizen service which encourage participation by students and senior citizens, actively seeking funding from federal and private sources, and reporting to the governor and to the Legislature each biennium on the progress of the center.

Membership on the Advisory Council on Voluntary Action is expanded and defined in more detail. Among those specifically named to serve on the council are representatives from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Employment Security Department, and the Department of Social and Health Services. Each of these state agencies is to assign its representative to work on that agency's citizen service programs at no less than .2 FTE.

The language authorizing the governor to create the Center for Voluntary Action is changed to a directive. The director of the Department of Community Development is directed to appoint one professional staff member to the center.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill directs the director of the Department of Community Development to hire an additional staff person for the center. The amended bill clarifies that the director is to hire one staff person, not necessarily an additional staff person to the center's current staffing level. The original bill requires the state agency members of the Council on Voluntary Action to work for the council at no less than .2 FTE. The amended bill clarifies that the agency

representatives are to work on their agencies' citizen service programs, rather than for the council.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The bill encourages citizen service and formalizes in statute a program that is already up and running. Work at the Center for Voluntary Action is going well. The intent of the legislation is not to replace employees with volunteers, but rather to provide additional services employees would not be able to provide. It is important to coordinate and support volunteer programs. Citizen service provides learning experiences as well as feelings of belonging and being needed, and positive self-esteem.

Testimony Against: There is a potential for conflict if agency representatives have voting rights on the advisory council while at the same time they are working for the council at agency expense. The Center for Voluntary Action could use additional funding, which is not requested in this bill.

Witnesses: Representatives Wes Pruitt, Val Ogden and Jeannette Wood (in favor); Joby Winans and Martin Kimeldorf, Department of Community Development (in favor); Carol Marble and Susan Emley, State Council on Voluntary Action (in favor, with amendment); Bill Basl, Department of Employment Security (in favor); Betty Fallihee, Higher Education Coordinating Board (in favor, with amendment); and Nadene Larson, Youth Enthusiastic about Service (in favor).