

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1407

AS OF APRIL 3, 1991

Brief Description: Defining procedure for investment of state funds.

SPONSORS: House Committee on State Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Dellwo, O'Brien, Heavey, Cantwell, Anderson, Wineberry and Valle).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS & INSURANCE

Staff: Meg Jones (786-7416)

Hearing Dates: April 4, 1991

BACKGROUND:

The MacBride principles are nine equal-opportunity and affirmative-action guidelines patterned on the Sullivan principles of South Africa. The principles were drafted by Father Sean McManus and others in the Irish National Caucus in consultation with the late Sean MacBride in 1984. Sean MacBride won the Nobel and Lenin Peace Prizes, served as Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations and was an advocate of human rights through his leadership of Amnesty International. Advocates report that the need for the MacBride principles arises out of unequal workforce representation of Roman Catholics, and that the majority of supervisory positions are held by Protestants.

Of a population of 1.5 million in Northern Ireland, approximately 900,000 are Protestant. 1988 statistics show that 17 percent of male Catholics are unemployed compared to 7 percent of Protestant men, and that Catholic unemployment is 2.5 times greater than that of Protestants. American companies employ 11 percent of the province of Northern Ireland's manufacturing work force. It is Washington State investment in these companies that would be affected if the MacBride principles are adopted.

As of February 1991, 12 states and 25 cities had enacted various forms of the MacBride principles.

SUMMARY:

The State Investment Board is required to compile an annual list of corporations in which the State Investment Board has invested that directly or through a subsidiary do business in Northern Ireland. The State Investment Board shall determine whether these corporations have taken substantial action to

achieve the goals of increased representation of under-represented religious groups in the work force, increased security, banning provocative religious or political emblems from the workplace, equitable advertising, hiring, discipline and termination policies in the workplace, and in-house programs for training and affirmative action.

The State Investment Board shall support shareholder resolutions designed to encourage corporations doing business in Northern Ireland to adopt the above goals, known as the MacBride principles. The State Investment Board shall also, as consistent with its investment policies, invest in companies conducting Northern Ireland operations in accordance with the MacBride principles.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested