

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 1800-S

April 22, 1991

To the Honorable, the House
of Representatives of
the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to sections 3, 5, and 10, Substitute House Bill No. 1800 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to international relations and protocol."

This bill establishes an Office of International Relations and Protocol within the Office of the Governor and provides the office with broad powers to manage international issues affecting this state. It eliminates current responsibilities relating to this function in the Department of Trade and Economic Development.

This is a sound organizational move which I strongly support. It recognizes that activities associated with these kinds of programs are not geared solely to economic and foreign trade considerations. They also affect the broad spectrum of state and local government responsibilities, including cross-cultural exchanges, international education opportunities, global environmental impacts, scientific and agricultural issues, and many other important policy considerations. The Office of the Governor is uniquely suited to provide the statewide leadership and intergovernmental coordination that is required by this important function.

In spite of my strong agreement with the bill's intent, the measure does have some administrative/fiscal problems that were clearly identified by my office during the session. Most importantly, the bill lacks funding to carry out certain mandated responsibilities. Both the Senate and House budgets currently provide only \$134,000 for the biennium and one staff person to perform a wide variety of required duties in section 3. These functions tend to be very resource-intensive. Without additional funding, it would be difficult to comply even minimally with some of these mandates.

In addition, section 5 requires the creation of an international relations advisory committee to consist of at least 15 members. In order for this group to function properly and exercise its statutory duties, it will have to meet regularly and be afforded reimbursement for travel expenses and lodging associated with its meetings. Without sufficient funding, it would be difficult for this group to function in the manner required by the bill.

I firmly believe that an important element in effective international relations programs is to ensure that expectations are matched with actions and resources that are consistent over time. Section 3, and to some extent, section 5, raise a set of expectations about the state performing a wide range of coordinative technical assistance, and diplomatic functions without providing the resources to carry them out. In the long run, I do

not believe that will enhance our status as a credible participant in the international arena.

Section 10, which requires automatic transfer of existing employees to the new office, is inconsistent with the authority given to the Governor in section 2 to appoint staff to the program.

For these reasons, I have vetoed sections 3, 5, and 10 of this bill.

With the exception of sections 3, 5, and 10, Substitute House Bill No. 1800 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Booth Gardner
Governor