

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2332

As Passed House:
February 11, 2004

Title: An act relating to the investing in innovation account.

Brief Description: Creating the investing in innovation account.

Sponsors: By Representatives Sullivan, Upthegrove, Fromhold and Hudgins.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 1/29/04, 2/3/04 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/11/04, 95-1.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Investing in Innovation Account in order to fund grants awarded by the Washington Technology Center.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Sehlin, Ranking Minority Member; Pearson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Anderson, Boldt, Buck, Chandler, Clements, Cody, Conway, Cox, Dunshee, Grant, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Linville, McDonald, McIntire, Miloscia, Ruderman, Schual-Berke, Sump and Talcott.

Staff: Holly Lynde (786-7153).

Background:

The Washington Technology Center (WTC) is a private, nonprofit organization with a mission to be "a nationally pre-eminent organization that focuses state, federal, and private resources on the development and commercialization of new products and technologies as a vital part of Washington's economic growth."

The WTC was created in 1983 by the Legislature under the Washington High Technology and Training Act. The WTC receives a portion of its funding from the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) and is administered by a board of directors appointed by the Governor that currently is made up of 11 industry representatives, nine university representatives, and four ex-officio members.

Summary of Bill:

The bill creates the Investing in Innovation Account in the custody of the State Treasurer. Expenditures from the account may be used for grants awarded by the WTC and for costs associated with administering the grant program, but may not be used for administrative costs incurred by CTED. Only the director of CTED, or the director's designee, may authorize expenditures from the account. The account is nonappropriated but allotted and is allowed to retain its interest earnings.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This is just a technical fix to allow the Washington Technology Collaborative to process grants. This bill currently does not cost any money. If we could get this program funded through the CTED then we could leverage funding from the federal government. This just sets up the fund and provides the vehicle for funding in the future. HB 1003 created a grant program called the Investing in Innovation Program. The Governor vetoed a section out of that bill specifically because it allowed WTC, a private, nonprofit and contractor to the state, to distribute state funds. This bill is a technical correction that would make the CTED, the agency with which WTC contracts, the formal authorizing agency to distribute the funds. There are no additional funds that go into this account.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Sullivan, prime sponsor; and Scott Hazlegrove, Washington Technology Center.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.