
**Community & Economic
Development & Trade Committee**

HB 1715

Brief Description: Assisting manufacturers.

Sponsors: Representatives Chase, Miloscia, B. Sullivan, Skinner, Grant, Hunt, McDermott, Morrell, Eickmeyer, Kessler, Haler, Kristiansen, Conway, Sells, Kenney and Simpson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs Washington Manufacturing Services to create additional programs to assist small manufacturers and to educate students regarding careers in manufacturing.

Hearing Date: 2/8/07

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

Manufacturing is a major employer in Washington, employing 300,000 residents and accounting for 13 percent of all employment in the state. The manufacturing sector contributes \$26.6 billion to the gross state product. However, manufacturing in Washington is on the decline, losing more than 44,600 jobs between June 2000 and June 2003. With increased competition from overseas manufacturers as well as from manufacturers located in other states, Washington's manufacturers are facing economic challenges.

Washington Manufacturing Services (WMS) is a not-for-profit organization with the mission of "fostering economic prosperity in the state of Washington by helping Washington's smaller manufacturers take action to increase their competitiveness (in a socially acceptable and environmentally responsible manner)." Affiliated with the National Institute of Standards and Technology Manufacturing Extension Program, the WMS can link manufacturers with local experts and national resources. Although the WMS is headquartered in Mukilteo, Washington, it maintains field offices throughout the state.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

After a free pre-project visit by a WMS project manager, the WMS will develop with the manufacturer a plan of action. The WMS offers a variety of services, including lean manufacturing, industrial marketing and quality, safety, energy conservation, e-Business, software selection, workforce training, and product development. The WMS charges fees for these services.

Summary of Bill:

WMS is directed to create programs which provide modernization services to manufacturing firms with 50 or fewer employees. In addition, WMS must create programs to assist small manufacturers to become certified in internationally accepted quality assurance programs. WMS shall develop partnerships for the delivery of services which will assist manufacturers in reducing costs, and increase their environmental compliance. WMS shall also create a program that educates students about careers in manufacturing and provide teachers with valuable educational resources. This program may also provide analytical tools with which young people may choose careers or the program could provide other resources that will assist students find great, high paying careers.

Appropriation: The sum of \$500,000 for Fiscal Year 2008 and \$500,000 for Fiscal Year 2009.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 29, 2007.

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