
**State Government & Tribal
Affairs Committee**

HB 2589

Brief Description: Establishing a maritime historic vessel restoration and preservation program.

Sponsors: Representatives Lantz, Seaquist, Campbell and Chase.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a competitive grant program for maritime historic restoration and preservation to be administered by the Washington State Historical Society.
- Requires one dollar of the annual vessel registration fee collected by the Department of Licensing be deposited into the Maritime Historic Restoration and Preservation Account to provide funding for the competitive grants.

Hearing Date: 1/22/08

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

Unless otherwise exempted, persons operating a boat for more than 60 days in Washington or owning a boat in Washington, must register their boat with the Department of Licensing (DOL). As of January 1, 2008, the registration fee for a boat is \$20.20 plus an excise tax of 0.5 percent of the value of the vessel or \$5.00, whichever is more. Of the annual registration fee, \$2.00 must be deposited into the Derelict Vessel Removal Account, \$1.50 must be deposited into the Aquatic Invasive Species Account, \$1.00 into the Freshwater Aquatic Algae Control Account and .50 into the Aquatic Invasive Species Enforcement Account.

Voluntary donations may be made to the Maritime Historic Restoration and Preservation Account (Account) simultaneously with registration. At the end of each fiscal year, the State Treasurer pays one-half of the fund balance to the Grays Harbor Historical Seaport and the remainder to the Steamer Virginia V Foundation for their corporate successors.

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.

The Account is not subject to allotment reductions.

Summary of Bill:

The Washington State Historical Society (Historical Society) must establish a competitive grant program and process to solicit proposals for a maritime historical restoration and preservation program. The Historical Society shall adopt policies governing the project eligibility and evaluation criteria. Using the criteria, the Historical Society, in conjunction with a citizen advisory committee, shall evaluate and rank applications. The prioritized project list, that includes a project description, amount of recommended state funding and documentation of non-state funds to be used, shall be submitted to the Governor and Legislature as part of the Historical Society's biennial budget request.

The amount of the state funding shall not exceed 50 percent of the project's total cost. The non-state funds of the project may include cash, the value of real property when acquired solely for the purpose of the project and in-kind contributions.

Qualified applicants may include local governments, public development authorities, nonprofit corporations, tribal governments and other entities.

Funding for the grant program shall come from the Account. The Historic Society's biennial project list and the associated recommended state funding for the projects may not exceed the biennial balance of the Account.

The Historical Society shall not sign contracts or financially obligate funds under this program until the Legislature has approved the specific list of projects. Contracts must include provisions requiring that capital improvements by the grant recipients be held for a specified period of time appropriate for the amount of the grant and that the facilities be used for the express purpose of the grant. If the grant recipient is out of compliance with the provisions of the grant contract, the grant recipient must repay the amount of the grant plus interest.

One dollar of the annual vessel registration fee must be deposited into the Account. The Account is subject to appropriation and must be used for the competitive grant program, except 10 percent of the funds must be transferred to the Grays Harbor Historical Seaport and 10 percent of the fund balance must be transferred to the Steamer Virginia V Foundation. If either of these two foundations and their corporate successors cease to exist, the Historical Society will retain the funds that would have been transferred. If both cease to exist, all the funds will be used for the competitive grant program.

The language requiring a study group to be formed to report to the Legislature by January 31, 1998 is eliminated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 15, 2008.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, except for section 3, which takes effect June 30, 2012.