

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SSB 6775

As Passed Senate, February 14, 2008

Title: An act relating to addressing the digital literacy and technology training needs of low-income and underserved areas through state support of community technology programs.

Brief Description: Addressing the digital literacy and technology training needs of low-income and underserved areas through state support of community technology programs.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Kauffman, Kilmer, Shin, Kastama, Franklin, Kohl-Welles and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Economic Development, Trade & Management: 1/25/08, 1/30/08 [DPS-WM].

Ways & Means: 2/12/08 [DP2S].

Passed Senate: 2/14/08, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE & MANAGEMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6775 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Kastama, Chair; Kilmer, Vice Chair; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Kauffman, King and Shin.

Staff: Jack Brummel (786-7428)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 6775 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair, Capital Budget Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair, Operating Budget; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Carrell, Hatfield, Honeyford, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Oemig, Parlette, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller and Schoesler.

Staff: Dean Carlson (786-7305)

Background: The use of information and communication technologies is increasingly important in the global economy. Not all residents of the state have digital literacy skills and sufficient access to these technologies. Washington State University Extension's Center to

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.

Bridge the Digital Divide has been devoted to enabling people to more effectively access and use modern information technology and has assisted some community-based technology programs in their efforts to address the needs of under-served communities.

Summary of Second Substitute Bill: The Community Technology Opportunity Program is created to be administered by the Washington State University Extension. The program administrator is to provide organizational, capacity building, and fund-raising support for community technology programs throughout the state. A minimum of 75 percent of program funds are to be distributed through a competitive grant program. The grants are to be used by community technology programs to provide training; assistance in use of information and communication technologies among low-income and under-served residents; and other information technology related services. There are a number of grant application requirements including a demonstration of need, development of an implementation plan, evidence of matching funds, and evidence that the grant funds will be used to increase organizational effort. The program administrator is to establish expected program outcomes for each grant recipient and grant recipients are to provide an annual accounting of outcomes. The Washington Community Technology Opportunity Account is created. Funds in the account may only be used for the operation of the Community Technology Opportunity Program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Recommended First Substitute (Economic Development, Trade & Management): PRO: This represents an opportunity for skill building in more communities. This is an investment in low-income people and those with disabilities. This dovetails with promoting entrepreneurship. Technology skills are critical but are not taught well in public schools. This is a statewide problem and needs a statewide solution. There is no state funding for community technology programs.

Persons Testifying (Economic Development, Trade & Management): PRO: Senator Kauffman, prime sponsor; Mike Corsini, Star Center of Seattle; Lew McMurrin, Washington Software Alliance; Chris Tugwell, YMCA of Greater Seattle; Betty Buckley, Stone Soup.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Ways & Means): None.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): No one.