

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2252

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
General Government & Information Technology

**Title:** An act relating to the state capital historical museum.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the state capital historical museum.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hudgins, Wilcox and S. Hunt.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

General Government & Information Technology: 2/5/16 [DPS].

### Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Transfers responsibility for the leasing, operations, and maintenance of the State Capital Historical Museum from the Washington State Historical Society to the Department of Enterprise Services.

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## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Kuderer, Vice Chair; MacEwen, Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Johnson, Morris and Senn.

**Staff:** Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

**Background:**

The State Capital Museum (Museum) is housed in the Lord Mansion, built in 1923. The mansion was donated to the state by the Lord family in 1937 and the Museum was subsequently opened in 1942. The building and grounds of the Museum are designated as part of the state capitol campus.

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*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.*

In 1993 the Washington State Historical Society (WSHS) assumed responsibility for the operation of the Museum. The WSHS is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established in statute as a trustee for the state. The WSHS's powers and duties include the collection and preservation of objects and materials illustrative of state history; the operation of state museums; conducting public outreach and education; and the authority to accept gifts, sell or exchange items, fundraise, and charge fees. The WSHS also submits a prioritized list of recommended heritage capital projects to the Governor and Legislature biennially for consideration for funding in the state capital budget.

The Department of Enterprise Services (DES) manages the 486-acre state capitol campus under the policy direction of the State Capitol Committee and Capitol Campus Design Advisory Committee. In the management of the public and historic facilities of the state capitol, the DES must apply the United States Secretary of the Interior's design standards for the treatment of historic properties.

The DES also assists state agencies with the acquisition, leasing, and disposal of real estate. With limited exceptions, the DES must purchase, lease, rent, or otherwise acquire all real estate required by state agencies. The DES reports annually to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) and the Legislature on facility leases executed for all state agencies, including lease terms and annual lease costs. The OFM maintains an inventory of all facilities owned or leased by state government and reports this information to the Legislature annually.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

Responsibility for the maintenance, operation, and leasing of the Museum is transferred from the WSHS to the DES. Provisions requiring the WSHS to house the WSHS collection at the Museum are removed. The DES may, in consultation with the OFM, lease the Museum to other state agencies or private parties. The DES must ensure reasonable public access for the public and community organizations, and may not sell or dispose of the building or grounds without the approval of the Legislature.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill requires the DES to consult with the OFM when leasing the Museum. The DES must ensure reasonable public access for the public and community organizations, and may not sell or dispose of the building or grounds without the approval of the Legislature. The emergency clause in the original bill is removed.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The WSHS had its funding reduced during the recession and it has not since been restored. The Lord Mansion doesn't have the proper environmental controls needed for a museum and it is not in the WSHS' mission to be landlords. The WSHS support for this bill is based in part upon the WSHS receiving its current funding levels in the budget.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Erich Ebel, Washington State Historical Society.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.