

IN THE NEWS

Legislation Proposed to Help Foster a Healthy Business Community

Legislation designed to make government less burdensome for Washington's business community was recently endorsed by the state House of Representatives.

House Bill 2510, sponsored by state Representative Ron Meyers, D-Port Orchard, would streamline the state's

regulatory process, making it more reasonable, efficient, and cost-effective.

"It's about time we begin to help Washington's business owners break through all the government red tape," Meyers said.

"Small businesses alone account for 70 percent of the

jobs in Washington. If we want to sustain a healthy economy, we need to take measures to foster a healthy business community."

If Meyers' bill becomes law, precise guidelines would be established for state agencies to follow when developing new regulations.

The measure would:

- Give businesses more opportunity to participate in the rule-making process;
- Make more information available to small-business owners about proposed regulations;
- Designate employees in each state agency to help

businesses comply with rules before handing out violations; and

- Direct agencies to evaluate the economic impacts of a regulation on small businesses before it is enacted.

The bill was introduced at the request of Governor Mike Lowry and incorporates the recommendations of a task force he appointed last summer to find ways to improve agency regulations.

Meyers represents House Democrats on the task force of legislative, business and community leaders.

"The task force heard from citizens and business owners all over Washington. They all told us they want a more efficient government. That's what this bill will do," Meyers said.

"There are simply too many contradictory and confusing rules on the books. It's a nightmare to comply with them all," said House Speaker Brian Ebersole, D-Tacoma.

Regulatory reform was named by House Democrats as one of their top priorities for this legislative session.

The measure now heads to the Senate for consideration.

Dispute Resolution Center Offers Residents Options

The Dispute Resolution Center of Kitsap County is a private, nonprofit corporation offering residents options for resolving civil disputes themselves, out of court, voluntarily, and within their own communities.

Since opening its office in

January 1991, the original DRC volunteer core has grown to include 21 certified mediators, 35 mediator interns and 6 client intake volunteers assisting the office staff.

The types of disputes resolved include landlord/tenant, student/parent/teacher, neigh-

borhood, consumer/merchant, child custody/visitation, employer/employee, and small claims.

In addition to staff, mediator volunteers and a Board of Directors, much of DRC work and program development is now performed

by four standing committees: the Community Relations and Finance, Rich Rucker; the Human Resources Committee, Val Torrens, chair; the Planning and Operations Committee, Don Drury, chair; and the Training Committee, Susan Daniel, chair.

These committees have the responsibility to assess and mentor volunteer resources, to propose DRC program direction, and to promote DRC service objectives to the community.

To meet these responsibilities, the committees are seeking active members interested in developing and supporting the community services of DRC.

For further information, call 377-4225.

POWER Holds Fund-raiser

People Organized Working for Ethnic Reality (POWER) will hold their first annual "You've Got the POWER" celebration on Saturday, March 5, from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. at 920 Park in Bremerton.

The mixer and fund-raiser according to Robert Boddie, "Is an opportunity to meet all the other concerned citizens working with you in the fight for the future of our young people and stopping the gang

influence in schools and on our streets," he said.

Former Denver Bronco running back Tony Boddie will be signing autographs, entertainment will be provided by Bob Winters and refreshments will be available.

Donation is \$5 at the door. For advanced tickets, call 792-0637 or 373-5390.

WESTNET Receives \$40,000

Kitsap County Prosecutor C. Danny Clem announced that his office received \$40,000 on behalf of WESTNET earlier this month.

Reunion, meeting planner's workbook

The Reunion & Meeting Planner's Workbook is now available from the Bremerton/Kitsap Visitor & Convention Bureau.

The workbook was developed to guide novice convention planners through the complexity of planning a large convention or reunion, and highlights the facilities and services available in the county.

To receive a copy of the workbook, call 479-3588.

The \$40,000 constituted proceeds from the sale of a house which had been seized after it was discovered that the owner, John E. Johnson, was growing marijuana in the house.

Johnson ultimately pled guilty to a felony charge of manufacturing a controlled substance.

After the Prosecuting Attorney's Office subsequently filed an action to forfeit the house, Johnson agreed to the sale of the house and the \$40,000 payment to WESTNET from the sale proceeds.

The money will be used by both the Prosecutor's Office and WESTNET in future drug related law enforcement activities.

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