

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6401

As Passed House:

March 5, 2002

Title: An act relating to standardizing references to county clerks.

Brief Description: Standardizing references to county clerks.

Sponsors: By Senators Kline, Costa, Long, Fairley, Thibaudeau and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Judiciary: 2/22/02, 2/25/02 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/5/02, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Standardizes and clarifies references to county clerks.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Lantz, Chair; Hurst, Vice Chair; Carrell, Ranking Minority Member; Dickerson, Esser, Jarrett, Lovick and Lysen.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Boldt.

Staff: Ryan Jensen (786-5793); Trudes Hutcheson (786-7384).

Background:

County clerks are independent, elected officials who act as administrative and financial officers for the superior courts of the counties. Clerks are required to keep various records at the expense of the county. These include, for example, a record for entering all verdicts, orders, judgements and decisions. The terms used in the Revised Code of Washington to describe the records kept by county clerks are not uniform. In some instances, reference is made to county clerks being required to keep a "journal" or a "book."

The state's Residential Landlord-Tenant Act requires owners of federally-assisted housing to give 12-month advance notice prior to the expiration of a rental assistance contract, or prepayment of an obligation that would allow early termination of specific low-income occupancy requirements. Written notice must be served on each tenant household residing in the housing and on the clerk of the city, or county if in an unincorporated area.

Summary of Bill:

References to the county clerk entering information into a "journal" or into a "book" are changed to require the county clerk to enter information into a "record."

The statute regarding notices by owners of federally-assisted housing is clarified to distinguish court clerks from clerks of the county legislative authority. Notice must be served on the clerk of the county legislative authority.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill makes archaic statutory language more current. Clerks no longer keep "journals." The statute is clarified to let people know that all federally-assisted housing matters are dealt with by the county commissioners, and notice should be sent to the clerk of the board of legislative authority.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Debbie Wilke, Washington State Association of County Clerks.