

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1903

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*As Passed House  
March 19, 1991*

**Title:** An act relating to handgun control.

**Brief Description:** Requiring trigger-locking devices on handguns.

**Sponsor(s):** By House Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Representatives Scott, Miller, Cole, Riley, Ludwig, Locke, Wineberry, Appelwick, Rasmussen, Wang, Ferguson and Anderson).

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Judiciary, March 6, 1991, DPS;  
Passed House, March 19, 1991, 87-11.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
JUDICIARY**

**Majority Report:** *That Substitute House Bill No. 1903 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*  
Signed by 19 members: Representatives Appelwick, Chair; Ludwig, Vice Chair; Padden, Ranking Minority Member; Paris, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Belcher; Broback; Forner; Hargrove; Inslee; Locke; R. Meyers; Mielke; H. Myers; Riley; Scott; D. Sommers; Tate; Vance; and Wineberry.

**Staff:** Jeff Fishel (786-7191).

**Background:** A licensed dealer can sell a short firearm or pistol to anyone who possesses a concealed weapons permit and who is of legal age, has not been convicted of a violent crime, is not a drug addict or habitual drunk and is not of unsound mind. With the purchase of a pistol, the dealer must provide the purchaser with a pamphlet prepared by the Department of Wildlife that explains the legal limits on the use of firearms, firearms safety, and that local ordinances are preempted unless consistent with state law. Firearms and pistols include any firearm with a barrel less than 12 inches.

**Summary of Bill:** The bill requires licensed dealers to offer trigger locks with the sale of each handgun. Failure to do so is a misdemeanor, and the dealer is subject to a

fine of up to \$1,000 or imprisonment of up to six months, or both. Handguns are included in the definition of short firearms and pistols.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Original Bill: The bill will help protect children.

**Testimony Against:** Original Bill: The bill will interfere with a person's right of self protection, especially when quick action is needed. The answer to the safety of children and firearms is education such as the National Rifle Association's "Eddie the Eagle" program. The bill also dictates how retailers must sell their wares.

**Witnesses:** Tim Erickson, Washington State Patrol (in favor of original bill); John Hosford, Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms (opposes original bill); and Carl Nelson, Washington Retailers Association (opposes original bill).