

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2300

*As Passed House
February 14, 1992*

Title: An act relating to death and burial records.

Brief Description: Allowing issuance of a burial-transit permit before a death certificate has been completed.

Sponsor(s): By House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representative Peery).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Local Government, February 7, 1992, DPS;
Passed House, February 14, 1992, 95-0.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Majority Report: *The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.* Signed by 15 members: Representatives Haugen, Chair; Cooper, Vice Chair; Ferguson; Ranking Minority Member; Mitchell, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bray; Edmondson; Franklin; Horn; Nealey; Nelson; Rayburn; Roland; Wood; Wynne; and Zellinsky.

Staff: Steve Lundin (786-7127).

Background: A system of state and local registers exists for the filing and retention of vital documents, such as death certificates.

A death certificate must include the cause of death that is certified by the attending physician or by the health officer or coroner if there is no attending physician. The local registrar issues a burial-transit permit when a complete death certificate is filed that includes a cause of death. However, a permit for the disposition of a body may be issued if requested when the cause of death cannot be determined within three days.

Summary of Bill: The Vital Statistics Task Force is created consisting of the secretary of health or a designee, the chair of the House of Representatives Local Government Committee or a designee, and the chair of the Senate Government Operations Committee or a designee.

The task force shall create a working group to provide information and advice to the task force. The working group consists of representatives of interest groups such as local health officers, funeral directors, physicians, and coroners.

The task force shall report to the Local Government Committee of the House of Representatives and Government Operations Committee by December 4, 1992, on a variety of matters relating to vital statistics, including the filing of death certificates, issuance of permits, timely disposition of remains and interstate transportation of the deceased.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This is a good bill. We are perfecting old law that is very unclear.

Testimony Against: (Substitute bill): None.

Witnesses: (Substitute bill - in favor): Elizabeth Ward, Department of Health; Doug Twibell, Washington State Funeral Directors Association; T.K. Bentler, Washington Funeral Directors Association; and Dr. Barbara Anderson, Island County Coroner.