

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1059

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*As Reported By House Committee on:  
Judiciary*

**Title:** An act relating to personal property exempt from enforcement of judgments.

**Brief Description:** Revising the list of personal property exempt from enforcement of judgments.

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Appelwick, Padden, Ludwig and Orr.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Judiciary, February 20, 1991, DPS.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
JUDICIARY**

**Majority Report:** *That Substitute House Bill No. 1059 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*  
Signed by 18 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; and Vance.

**Staff:** Bill Perry (786-7123).

**Background:** Certain kinds of property are exempt by statute from the remedies creditors normally have in enforcing judgments. Various kinds of personal property are exempt up to specified values.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** General increases are made in the value of personal property that is exempt from judgment. Changes include the following:

- o The maximum exemption for certain wearing apparel, consisting of furs and jewelry, is raised from \$750 to \$1,000.
- o The maximum exemption for private libraries is raised from \$1,000 to \$1,500.

- o The maximum exemption for household goods is raised from \$1,000 to \$2,300, and a separate exemption of unspecified value for three months' worth of provisions and fuel for "comfortable maintenance" is removed.
- o The maximum exemption for "other" personal property, excluding wages or salary, is raised from \$500 to \$1,000. An existing \$100 subcategory of "other" property is expanded to two \$100 subcategories, one for cash and one for bank accounts, stocks, and bonds.
- o The maximum exemption for motor vehicles is changed from \$1,200 for one car only, to \$2,500 in aggregate for up to two cars.
- o The maximum exemptions for farm equipment, professional equipment, and tools of a trade are each raised from \$3,000 to \$5,000.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The original bill would have raised each of the exemption limits to a greater extent than the substitute does. The original bill also would have added new exemptions for the unused portion of the homestead, real property, exemption and for collections of items such as guns, stamps, or coins.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested January 17, 1991.

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

**Testimony For:** These amounts have not been substantially changed in many years. Inflation alone requires some adjustment.

**Testimony Against:** The original bill might have adversely impacted child support enforcement.

**Witnesses:** Susan Stanley, Washington State Bar Association (in favor); Lonnie Johns-Brown, Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs and National Organization of Women (commented on the bill); Dave Hogan, Department of Social and Health Services (opposes original bill); and Sandra Stith, Washington Collectors Association (commented on the bill).