

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1639

*As Reported By House Committee on:
State Government*

Title: An act relating to state printing.

Brief Description: Requiring union labels on state printing.

Sponsor(s): Representatives R. King, O'Brien, Jones, Heavey, Basich, Franklin, Grant, Orr, Prentice, Cole, Dellwo and Anderson.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
State Government, March 6, 1991, DP.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
STATE GOVERNMENT**

Majority Report: *Do pass.* Signed by 6 members:
Representatives Anderson, Chair; Pruitt, Vice Chair;
R. Fisher; Grant; O'Brien; and Sheldon.

Minority Report: *Do not pass.* Signed by 4 members:
Representatives McLean, Ranking Minority Member; Bowman,
Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler; and Moyer.

Staff: Linda May (786-7135).

Background: The Office of the Public Printer prints and binds material for the Legislature and for agencies, officers, boards, commissions, and institutions. Recipients may request that documents do or do not bear a union label. The public printer has the authority to farm out printing jobs to private sources if doing so is more economical than doing the work in the state printing plant.

Summary of Bill: All printing done by the state printer or farmed out to other printers must bear the label of a recognized printing labor organization, with one exception. If a printing firm does not have the use of such a label and is printing work provided for under the public printer statutes, that firm must file a sworn statement with the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) certifying that the employees doing the printing are receiving the prevailing wage rate. L&I will determine the prevailing wage rate

based on established collective bargaining agreements in the printing and binding industry.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The state printer "bug" symbolizes important things such as cooperation between labor and management, and employees receiving a fair wage. If work is to be jobbed out, it should be to people who are good entrepreneurs, not people who put in a low bid because they pay low wages. People should be paid a fair wage. This bill will lower costs to the state because the union label lets you know that well-trained, qualified people will turn your work around quickly.

Testimony Against: Many of the forms and other items used by the state and by educational institutions are copyrighted and are only available from non-union shops. This bill could end participation by minority businesses, who don't pay union wages. The program would be an administrative nightmare. Many binderies and print shops are overwhelmingly against this legislation. Some non-union shops do tasks that union shops can't offer; this work would then be shipped out of state. The bill will hurt businesses and their employees. Prevailing wage is an artificial item. Wages paid by non-union shops in Olympia may compare to wages of union shops in Olympia, but not union shops in Seattle. There is a tremendous range in bids high and low for state print jobs, from both union and non-union shops. Unions should have to sell themselves and convince employees to join them; the State should not do their job for them. The State would have to pay more for its printing. This is a taxpayer issue. The State would not be able to enforce a prevailing wage rate outside of the boundaries of the state. There would be new costs to the Department of Labor and Industries to do the rulings. Prevailing wage must be tied to job classifications, which may tie people into artificial slots. There is plenty of work for union and non-union shops alike.

Witnesses: Chuck Bailey, Washington State Labor Council (in favor); John Bachler, Graphic Communications Union (in favor); Leland Blankenship, Department of Printing (opposed); Michael J. Lane, Tabs Plus Inc. (opposed); Allen Walton, Tumwater Printing (opposed); Steve Elder, Department of Printing (in favor); Clif Finch, Association of Washington Business (opposed); and Ray Schow, All Night Printery (opposed).