

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 5587**

**AS OF FEBRUARY 18, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Changing the Washington state guard to the Washington state defense force.

**SPONSORS:** Senators McCaslin, Sutherland and Roach; by request of Military Department.

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS**

**Staff:** Barbara Howard (786-7410)

**Hearing Dates:** February 19, 1991

**BACKGROUND:**

Both a state and national guard are created under Title 38 RCW. The State Guard consists of an unpaid, volunteer group available to the Governor when the National Guard is called to active federal service. The most recent assignments for the State Guard have been in disaster or emergency response activities and training.

The public commonly perceives the state and national guards as synonymous. In 1955, Congress renamed the states' "military forces" as "defense forces." The Adjutant General has concluded that the semantic confusion can be eliminated by renaming the Washington State Guard the "Washington State Defense Force." This will also make the terms more consistent with federal language and usage in other states.

**SUMMARY:**

Throughout Title 38 RCW, the "state guard" is renamed the "state defense force."

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** none requested