

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJR 4200

As Reported By House Committee On:
Local Government

Brief Description: Amending the Constitution to permit municipalities and state agencies to employ chaplains.

Sponsors: Representatives Franklin, Zellinsky, Campbell and Kremen.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Local Government, January 28, 1993, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives H. Myers, Chair; Bray, Vice Chair; Edmondson, Ranking Minority Member; Reams, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Horn; Rayburn; Van Luven; and Zellinsky.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Dunshee; R. Fisher; Romero; and Springer.

Staff: Steve Lundin (786-7127).

Background: The state constitution prohibits the use of public money or property to be used for any religious worship, exercise, or instruction, or for the support of any religious establishment. However, these prohibitions do not forbid the legislature from providing for the state to employ a chaplin for state custodial, correctional, and mental institutions.

Summary of Bill: The legislature is authorized to permit counties and public hospital districts to employ chaplains at their hospitals, health facilities, and hospice.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The resolution becomes effective immediately upon certification of the election results of the November 1993 general election, if the voters approve the amendment.

Testimony For: The auditor indicates that the constitution precludes hospital districts from employing chaplains. Chaplains can play an essential role in both the healing process and dying.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: (Pro): Representative Franklin, prime sponsor; and Greg Vigdor, Washington State Hospital Association.