

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6305

As Reported By House Committee On:
Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to the employment of minors as actors or performers in film, video, or theatrical productions.

Brief Description: Revising the process for employment of minors as actors or performers in film, video, or theatrical productions.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor & Commerce (originally sponsored by Senators Snyder, Skratek, Roach, Nelson, Loveland, West, Winsley and M. Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Commerce & Labor, February 22, 1994, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Heavey, Chair; Lisk, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Conway; Horn; Springer and Veloria.

Staff: Chris Cordes (786-7117).

Background: Minors under age 18 may not be employed in Washington unless the employer has obtained a minor work permit from the Department of Labor and Industries. Employers are permitted to apply to the department for a variance from mandated employment standards. The department will grant a variance if the applicant has shown good cause for the lack of compliance with the standard.

It is a misdemeanor to employ, or permit to be employed, children under the age of 14 in any work other than work connected with farm or house work unless written permission has been obtained from a superior court judge in the county in which the child resides.

Summary of Bill: The provision that creates a misdemeanor for employing or permitting the employment of a minor under the age of 14 without the written permission of a superior court judge does not apply to children employed as actors or performers in film, video, audio, or theatrical productions.

The Department of Labor and Industries is directed to issue a work permit and a variance for minors who are employed as actors or performers upon finding that the terms of employment sufficiently protect the minor's health, safety, and welfare. The findings must be based on information provided to the department regarding the minor's working conditions, planned work schedule, adult supervision, and any planned educational programs.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Getting permission to use children in television public service announcements is cumbersome because the production company must get a permit from the Department of Labor and Industries and a second permit from a judge. This bill would eliminate one step in the process, saving both time and money. The bill requires safeguards for the employment of children in filming productions. In addition, the actor's union has procedures in place for informing parents about working conditions for child actors and for monitoring production sites.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: (In favor) Becky Bogard, Washington Association of Broadcasters and the Washington Motion Picture Council; Steve Smalley, KOMO Television; and Tony Hazapis, American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and the Screen Actors Guild.