

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2504

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE, FEBRUARY 23, 1994

Brief Description: Changing the name of the profession from shorthand reporting to court reporting, and changing some of the licensing requirements.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Representatives Jacobsen and Anderson; by request of Department of Licensing)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Moore, Chairman; Prentice, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Deccio, Fraser, McAuliffe, Newhouse, Pelz, Prince, Sellar, Sutherland, Vognild and Wojahn.

Staff: Traci Ratzliff (786-7452)

Hearing Dates: February 21, 1994; February 23, 1994

BACKGROUND:

Court reporters make verbatim records of court proceedings, depositions, and other official proceedings. A court reporter may work as an official reporter for a superior court judge or may work on an independent basis, reporting depositions and various official proceedings.

In 1989, the Legislature enacted the shorthand reporting practice act. The act provides that no person may represent himself or herself as a court reporter, shorthand reporter, certified shorthand reporter, or certified court reporter without first obtaining a certificate from the Department of Licensing. An applicant must pass an examination no more difficult than the examination for official reporters and meet other qualifications that include: be of good moral character; not have engaged in unprofessional conduct; and not have been determined to be unable to practice with reasonable skill and safety because of a mental or physical impairment. The director may issue a one-year temporary certificate to an individual who holds another certification or has graduated from court reporting school, but has not passed the examination. The director has the authority to prepare and administer or approve the preparation and administration of the examination.

In the shorthand reporting practice act, the practice of "shorthand reporting or court reporting" is defined as "the making by means of written symbols or abbreviations in

shorthand or machine writing of a verbatim record" of court proceedings, depositions, or other official proceedings and the producing of a transcript from the proceeding. However, the act did not prohibit the practice of court reporting or use of the title "certified court reporters" by stenographers who were practicing as of September 1, 1989.

SUMMARY:

The court reporting practice act is adopted. All references to the practice of "shorthand reporting or court reporting" are changed to "court reporting." A person may not practice as a court reporter without first obtaining a certificate from the department.

The definition of the "practice of court reporting" includes making a verbatim record by oral recording by a stenograph reporter.

The director is authorized to approve the preparation and administration of examinations, but not to prepare and administer the examinations herself. The director is also authorized to set the criteria for meeting the standard required for certification.

The qualifications for certification include meeting the standards set by the director and: (1) holding a National Court Reporters Association or National Stenograph Verbatim Reporters Association certificate of proficiency, registered professional reporter certificate, or certificate of merit; (2) passing a nationally recognized examination with equal or higher standards; (3) holding a current Washington State court reporter certification; or (4) passing an examination approved by the director.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Technical amendments are made to the bill.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR: None

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: No one