

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 5157

C 341 L 93

SYNOPSIS AS ENACTED

Brief Description: Increasing statutory attorneys' fees.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Hargrove and Nelson)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

BACKGROUND:

Parties in a civil lawsuit may recover attorney's fees. Attorney's fees may be awarded by way of contractual agreement, by court decision or by statute.

In civil cases involving sums under \$10,000, state statutes allow for attorney's fees in the amount of \$50 to the prevailing party, unless otherwise provided.

To obtain the statutory award of attorney's fees, the debt recovery or judgment obtained by the prevailing party must be at least \$25, exclusive of the costs of bringing the lawsuit. These cases are generally tried in district court.

Statutory attorney's fees in cases involving sums over \$10,000, which are generally tried in superior court, are \$125.

SUMMARY:

Statutory attorney's fees in cases involving less than \$10,000 shall be \$125, provided the judgment amount is for \$50 or more.

VOTES ON FINAL PASSAGE:

Senate	49	0	
House	96	0	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)
House			(House refused to recede)
Senate	41	4	(Senate concurred)

EFFECTIVE: July 25, 1993