

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6405

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES,
FEBRUARY 3, 1994**

Brief Description: Modifying licensing and inspection of transient accommodations.

SPONSORS: Senator Talmadge; by request of Department of Health

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6405 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Talmadge, Chairman; Wojahn, Vice Chairman; Deccio, Franklin, Fraser, Hargrove, McAuliffe, McDonald, Moyer, Niemi, Prentice, Quigley and Winsley.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Hearing Dates: February 2, 1994; February 3, 1994

BACKGROUND:

Under current law, the 1,469 "transient accommodations" in this state are subject to annual inspections as a condition of license renewal. These accommodations include hotels, motels, resorts, youth hostels, and shelters. The Department of Health inspects such things as the cleanliness of rooms, how the laundry is done, the water temperature, the type of bedding and anything relevant to the sanitation and maintenance of the living environment. These inspections do not include food service, which is typically handled by the local health department. Fire safety inspections are handled by the local fire department.

SUMMARY:

The number of facilities inspected yearly is reduced from all to 10 percent. The Department of Health will develop and use alternative survey methods which will encourage the person operating the transient accommodation to self-inspect and comply with licensing rules.

The annual license period is the period from the date of issuance rather than January 1 to December 31.

A single fee to cover the cost of licensure and enforcement activities is established.

The Department of Health is authorized to impose civil fines in lieu of or in addition to revocation or suspension of a license.

A 60-day filing period for an initial license and 30 day filing period for a renewal are required.

Language is amended in statute removing the redundant requirement that the Department of Community Development, through the Director of Fire Protection, enforce fire life safety standards, normally carried out by local fire authorities.

The bill is expected to save \$396,574 over the next two biennia.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

Statutory language is replaced requiring the state fire marshal to promulgate rules and regulations establishing fire and life safety standards. Language is deleted from RCW 70.62.290 requiring the state fire marshal enforce those rules.

The Department of Health is required to report back to the Legislature by December 1, 1996 on the impact of cutbacks in inspections of transient accommodations and on the self-evaluation program. The provisions in Section 4 expire on June 30, 1997 unless extended by the Legislature.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

The majority of transient accommodation licenses do not need annual inspections. This bill initiates an experiment to see if they maintain high standards with less inspection.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Becky Bogard, WA State Hotel/Motel Assn. (pro); Kathy Stout, DOH (pro); Dick Small, FPS/DCD