

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1152

As Reported By House Committee On:
Law & Justice

Title: An act relating to fees for concealed pistol licenses.

Brief Description: Changing fees regarding concealed pistol licenses.

Sponsors: Representatives Pennington, Buck, Smith, Sherstad, Beekma, Hargrove, Campbell, Chappell, Basich, Sheldon, Backlund, L. Thomas, Thompson, Foreman, Benton, McMorris, Robertson, Goldsmith, McMahan, Chandler, Clements, Mulliken, Johnson, D. Schmidt, B. Thomas, Delvin, Koster, Hymes, Skinner, Mielke and Padden.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Law & Justice: 1/27/95, 2/10/95 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Padden, Chairman; Delvin, Vice Chairman; Hickel, Vice Chairman; Campbell; Carrell; Chappell; Lambert; McMahan; Morris; Robertson; Sheahan and Smith.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Appelwick, Ranking Minority Member; Costa, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cody; Thibaudeau and Veloria.

Staff: Bill Perry (786-7123).

Background: With limited exceptions, a person is required to obtain a license before carrying a concealed pistol. An application for a concealed pistol license requires a fingerprint and criminal background check. A license must be renewed every four years.

Prior to 1994, the fee for an original license was \$23. The distribution of that fee was as follows: \$4 to the state general fund, \$4 to the agency taking the fingerprints, \$12 to the issuing authority, and \$3 to the firearms range account.

The issuing authority's \$12 share had remained the same since 1983, when the share was raised from \$1.50. At the same time, the total cost of an original license was raised from \$5 to \$20. In 1988, the total cost was raised \$3 to \$23, with the additional \$3 earmarked for the firearms range account.

The pre-1994 fee for a renewal license was \$15, with \$4 distributed to the state general fund, \$8 to the issuing authority, and \$3 to the firearms range account. As with original licenses, the fee for a renewal license was raised \$3 in 1988, with the increase allocated to the firearms range account.

Before 1994, a late fee of \$10 was assessed for a license not renewed within 90 days of expiration, with \$3 allocated to the state wildlife fund and \$7 allocated to the issuing authority.

In 1994, as part of E2SHB 2319, all of the concealed pistol licensing fees were increased. An original license fee was increased from \$23 to \$50, to be distributed as follows: \$15 to the state general fund, \$10 to the agency taking the fingerprints, \$15 to the issuing authority, and \$10 to the firearms range account. A renewal license fee was increased from \$15 to \$50, with \$20 to the state general fund, \$20 to the issuing authority and \$10 to the firearms range account. The late penalty was increased to \$20, with \$10 to the state wildlife fund and \$10 to the issuing authority.

As of October 1, 1994, the federal government has begun to charge local issuing authorities a fee of \$24 for each fingerprint check done in connection with a concealed pistol license application.

Summary of Substitute Bill: With one exception, concealed pistol license fees are restored to the amounts that existed before they were raised in 1994. The one exception is that the original issuance fee is set at \$25, instead of \$23, with the additional \$2 going to the issuing authority.

The fees under the bill are as follows:

1. An original four-year license costs \$25 with the money distributed as follows: \$4 to the state general fund; \$4 to the local fingerprinting agency; \$14 to the local issuing authority; and \$3 to the firearms range account.
2. A renewal license costs \$15 with the money distributed as follows: \$4 to the state general fund; \$8 to the issuing authority; and \$3 to the firearms range account.
3. The fee for a late renewal is \$10 with the money distributed as follows: \$3 to the state wildlife fund; and \$7 to the issuing authority.

Local issuing authorities are allowed to pass on to applicants the FBI fee for fingerprint checks.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill differs from the original bill in two ways. First, the original bill restores all fees to exactly what they were before the 1994 legislation. Second, the original bill does not contain the authority to pass on FBI fees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Many people, particularly the elderly and single parents, cannot afford the fee for a concealed pistol license. The current fees are just designed to generate government revenue.

Testimony Against: The fee amounts to only \$12.25 per year, and even now is not enough to cover the cost to local governments for processing applications. Taxpayers should not be subsidizing license holders.

Testified: Representative Pennington, prime sponsor (pro); Joyce Boss, Women for Defense Rights (pro); Dave Workman, National Rifle Association (pro); Myrtle Cooper, citizen (pro); Terry Jennings, citizen (pro); Cecil Escalante, citizen (pro); Larry Erickson, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (con); Jeanne Jacobs, Everett Police Department (con); and Kurt Sharar, Association of Washington Counties (con).