

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1505

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**As Passed House**

March 11, 1997

**Title:** An act relating to exemptions from public disclosure.

**Brief Description:** Protecting privacy of law enforcement personnel.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on Government Administration (originally sponsored by Representatives Cairnes, O'Brien, Robertson, Delvin, Scott, McDonald, L. Thomas, Costa, Linville, Mitchell, Schoesler, Mielke, Thompson, Carrell, Conway and Dunn).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Government Administration: 2/14/97, 2/21/97 [DPS].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 3/11/97, 97-0.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives D. Schmidt, Chairman; D. Sommers, Vice Chairman; Scott, Ranking Minority Member; Gardner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Doumit; Dunn; Dunshee; Murray; Reams; Smith; L. Thomas; Wensman and Wolfe.

**Staff:** Bill Lynch (786-7092).

**Background:** Each state and local agency is required to make all public records available for public inspection and copying unless the record is exempted from disclosure. The Legislature has enacted a number of such exemptions, including residential addresses and phone numbers of employees or volunteers of a public agency which are held by the public agency; and the residential addresses, phone numbers, and social security numbers of health care providers maintained by the Department of Health.

There is no express exemption provided for the home addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers, or photos of active or former law enforcement personnel, corrections personnel, personnel of the Department of Social and Health Services with certain investigative responsibilities, or personnel of the Department of Revenue or local governments involved with revenue collection and enforcement or enforcement

of child support. There is also no exemption provided for records that disclose similar types of information for the spouses and children of such personnel.

**Summary of Bill:** The home addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers, and photos of active or former state and local law enforcement personnel, including correctional and correctional probation officers, are exempt from public inspection and copying. These same records are also exempt from public disclosure and copying when they relate to personnel of the Department of Social and Health Services whose duties include the investigation of abuse, neglect, exploitation, fraud, theft, or other criminal activities; and personnel of the Department of Revenue or local governments whose responsibilities include revenue collection and enforcement or child support enforcement.

The home addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers, photos, and places of employment of the spouses and children of such personnel are also exempt from public disclosure and copying. In addition, the names and locations of schools and day care facilities attended by the children of such personnel are exempt from public disclosure and copying.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** It is necessary to protect the people and their families who protect us. Criminals often seek to get even with these employees and threaten their families.

**Testimony Against:** This bill is unnecessary to protect these employees because much of it is already in statute. This could create problems for disclosure of legitimate business interests.

**Testified:** Representative Cairnes, prime sponsor; Mike Patrick, Washington State Council and Police Chiefs; Lynn Mckinnon, Washington Public Employees Association; and Rowland Thompson, Allied Daily News (with concerns).