

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia Washington

BilAnalysis

BilNo. HB 2474

Clarifying gifts-/ethics public service
Brief title

Hrg Date: 1/28/98

Reps. Pennington/Appelwick
Sponsor

Staff John Carmichael
Comm. on Govt. Admin.
Phone: 786-7093

BACKGROUND:

The Ethics in Public Service Act prohibits state officers and employees from seeking or accepting certain gifts. Generally, state officers and employees are not allowed to accept gifts worth more than \$50. The value of gifts given to an officer or employee's family member is included when determining if the \$50 limit has been exceeded, unless the family member has an independent relationship with the donor.

The act excludes several items from the definition of gift. Items from family members or friends that are clearly not designed to gain influence are excluded from the definition. Another exclusion allows state officers and employees to accept payment of enrollment fees and reasonable travel expenses to attend seminars or educational programs. The programs must be sponsored by a nonprofit professional, educational, or trade association or charitable institution.

Summary:

The value of gifts given to the guest of a state officer or employee is counted in the same way as gifts given to family members.

State officers or employees may accept enrollment fees and reasonable travel expenses for seminars and educational programs sponsored by governmental associations or institutions, in addition to programs sponsored by nonprofit associations or institutions.

FISCAL NOTE: Not requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill passed.