

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia Washington

BilAnalysis

BilNo. HB 2483

Exempting computers software from public disclosure Hrg Date: 1/28/98
Brief title

Reps. Dunn/Wolfe
Sponsor

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BACKGROUND:

Information held by a public agency is generally subject to public disclosure. Numerous exemptions to the public disclosure requirements are codified in statute. Some of these exemptions relate to records containing personal information and proprietary business information. State and local agencies are required to make records not included within a statutory exemption available for public inspection and copying.

SUMMARY:

A new exemption is added to the public disclosure requirements.

An agency's computers software is exempt from public inspection and copying. The exemption applies to computers software (a) wholly owned by an agency; and (b) owned by an agency in conjunction with a private entity.

For purposes of the exemption, computers software is defined as the programming source code or object code necessary for the operation of a computer program. Records accessible through the computer program are not included within the exemption and are subject to public disclosure unless otherwise exempt.

An intent section specifies that the new statutory exemption is designed to protect taxpayer investments in software development and to encourage public-private cooperation with respect to software development.

FISCAL NOTE: Not requested.

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