

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1081

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Education, March 20, 1997

Title: An act relating to tobacco policies for schools.

Brief Description: Strengthening school policies and prohibitions on the use of tobacco at schools.

Sponsors: Representatives Koster, Mulliken, Dunn, Mielke, Thompson, McMorris, Boldt, Sterk, Sherstad, Bush and Smith.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 3/20/97 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hochstatter, Chair; Finkbeiner, Vice Chair; Goings, Johnson, Rasmussen and Zarelli.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: In 1985, the Legislature passed the Washington Clean Indoor Air Act. The act prohibits smoking in a public place, including educational facilities, except in designated smoking areas. Anyone violating the act is subject to a civil fine of up to \$100.

Since 1991, the state has required a total ban on the use of tobacco products on public school property. School districts are required to enforce the ban, except that school districts may adopt policies that exempt alternative education programs.

Summary of Bill: School district tobacco policy requirements are modified.

The exemption for alternative education programs from the ban on the use of tobacco products on school property is eliminated.

At a minimum, each school district tobacco policy must require:

- notification of students and school employees regarding the prohibition on the use of tobacco products;
- signs prohibiting the use of tobacco products;
- sanctions for students and school employees who violate the prohibition; and
- enforcement of the prohibition by school district employees.

Enforcement policies must be in addition to the enforcement provisions of the Washington Clean Indoor Air Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on August 1, 1997.

Testimony For: This bill eliminates the exemption from the ban on tobacco use on school property and provides minimum requirements for school district policies. A school district should not provide a smoking area on the school campus. Smoking is not good for anyone. The average age to start smoking is 14 years old. Tobacco is a highly addictive product. Our schools should not say smoking is okay.

Testimony Against: The sanctions are vague. Swift and certain punishment is necessary to be an effective deterrent. What does the language school district personnel must enforce– mean? What happens at a nonschool sponsored event or on the weekend?

Testified: Representative Koster, prime sponsor (pro); Dan Steele, WA State School Directors Association (pro with concerns); Nick Federici, Lung Association of Washington (pro with concerns); David Allen, American Cancer Society (pro).