

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1750

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Financial Institutions, Insurance & Housing, February 25, 1998

Title: An act relating to mobile home park sewer systems.

Brief Description: Protecting existing functional mobile home park septic systems.

Sponsors: House Committee on Government Administration (originally sponsored by Representatives D. Sommers, Sterk and Sheldon).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Financial Institutions, Insurance & Housing: 3/26/97, 4/1/97 [DPA, DNP]; 2/18/98, 2/25/98 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, INSURANCE & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Winsley, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Finkbeiner, Hale, Heavey, Kline and Prentice.

Staff: Dave Cheal (786-7576)

Background: Cities, towns, and counties are authorized to construct, maintain, and operate sewer systems. Water-sewer districts have the express authority to compel property owners within an area served by the district's sewers to connect to the sewer system. Cities, towns, and counties lack the express statutory authority to compel property owners to connect to sewers.

When local boards of health identify failing septic systems, they are directed to use their discretion in implementing corrections, such as specifying nonwater-carried sewage disposal devices or other alternative methods of treatment and disposal as a way to address the substandard conditions. A city or county may use more restrictive standards for failing septic systems if it determines that it is necessary to protect the public health, attain state water quality standards, or protect shellfish and other public resources.

Summary of Amended Bill: A city, town, or county cannot require an existing mobile home park to replace existing septic systems, which are functional, with a sewer system within the community, unless the local board of health determines that the septic system is failing.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The amended bill requires a determination by a local board of health that a mobile home park septic system is failing before the mobile home park can be compelled to hook up to a sewer system.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Forcing a mobile home park to hook up to a sewer when the existing septic system is working fine is a needless and significant expense that park residents should not have to bear. In some cases requiring hook-up would lead to park closure.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Len Booge, WA Manufactured Housing Communities; Ray Munson, MHOA.