

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6327

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Commerce & Labor, January 20, 1998

Title: An act relating to providing entrepreneurial opportunities for disabled persons.

Brief Description: Providing entrepreneurial opportunities for disabled persons.

Sponsors: Senators Schow, Fairley, Roach, Finkbeiner, Heavey and Franklin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 1/20/98 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Schow, Chair; Horn, Vice Chair; Anderson, Franklin, Fraser, Heavey and Newhouse.

Staff: Genevieve Pisarski (786-7488)

Background: The Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises was created in 1983 to promote maximum participation by minorities and women in state contracting and procurement. The office develops and implements plans to increase opportunities, certifies businesses, and establishes annual participation goals. In 1997, proposals were brought before the Legislature to incorporate disabled persons into all Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises provisions.

Summary of Bill: "Disabled person" is defined as a person with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity but is not related to drug or alcohol addiction. The Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises becomes the Office of Minority, Women's, and Disabled Persons' Business Enterprises. Disabled persons are incorporated into certain provisions: specifically, programs to promote participation in public contracting; comprehensive plans for participation; identification of barriers to participation; certification for participation; and exemption from performance bonds. The act expires on June 30, 2001.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 19, 1998.

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

Testimony For: Certification and exemption from performance bonds, together with programs to identify barriers and promote participation, will open opportunities in both state and local public contracting to businesses owned by disabled persons. Education and

awareness will promote utilization of such businesses. Significant numbers of disabled persons are able to work but lack employment opportunities. With the help of opportunities in public contracting, significant numbers of disabled persons can become taxpayers rather than recipients of assistance.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Skip Dreps, Northwest Chapter, PVA; Toby Olson, Governor's Committee on Disabilities and Employment; Greg Morris, Richard Regan, Glen Strachan, Washington Alliance for Business Owners with Disabilities.