

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 1504-S

March 31, 1998

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,

The House of Representatives of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Substitute House Bill No. 1504 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to public record protection;"

Substitute House Bill No. 1504 was originally intended to exempt from disclosure the records of a public agency that reveal its strategy in collective bargaining negotiations and grievance and mediation proceedings. It was a reasonable goal to attempt to protect the integrity of the collective bargaining process and ensure a level playing field in such sensitive negotiations and proceedings.

However, the bill was amended to expressly require that these records be released after the conclusion of the proceedings. That requirement would likely have had an unfortunate chilling effect on the bargaining process and other highly sensitive personnel proceedings that require a level of mutual trust, the free exchange of information, and some assurances of confidentiality.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Substitute House Bill No. 1504 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor