

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 5718-S

May 20, 1997

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Substitute Senate Bill No. 5718 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to restricting the release and use of certain personal information from state motor vehicle and driver records;"

Substitute Senate Bill No. 5718 would restructure the state's motor vehicle and driver records disclosure laws so that they conform to the federal Driver's Privacy Protection Act of 1994. This measure does contain a few improvements over our existing disclosure laws. The bill does not, however, go far enough in protecting personal information of citizens that is held by the state.

This legislation would provide broad access to personal information by businesses and other organizations for uses other than those for which the information was originally collected. It specifically authorizes the disclosure of Social Security numbers, telephone numbers, medical and disability information, and other data about individuals that could be used for inappropriate and illegal purposes.

I understand that Washington, like other states, is required to have policies and practices that are in substantial compliance with the federal law and that this bill is designed to meet those requirements. I am convinced, however, that our state can temporarily comply with federal standards through adoption of rules and policies that are also not inconsistent with current state law. I have, therefore, instructed the Department of Licensing to modify its information disclosure policies to conform with the federal Driver's Privacy Protection Act until a review of this issue is completed, and legislation with greater safeguards for personal privacy can be enacted.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Substitute Senate Bill No. 5718 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor