

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5175

As Reported By House Committee On:

Education

Title: An act relating to the donation of surplus computers and computer-related equipment to school districts in Washington and educational service districts in Washington.

Brief Description: Authorizing the donation of surplus computers and computer-related equipment to school districts and educational service districts.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on State & Local Government (originally sponsored by Senators Patterson, Horn, Franklin, Eide, B. Sheldon, Finkbeiner, McCaslin, Goings, Oke, Winsley, Kohl-Welles, Fraser, Rasmussen, Costa and Benton; by request of Department of General Administration and Superintendent of Public Instruction).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 3/18/99, 3/25/99 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill (As Amended by House Committee)

- State agencies may donate surplus computers and computer-related equipment to school districts and educational service districts.
- The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Department of General Administration will jointly develop guidelines to implement this authority.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Quall, Democratic Co-Chair; Talcott, Republican Co-Chair; Haigh, Democratic Vice Chair; Schindler, Republican Vice Chair; Carlson; Cox; Keiser; Rockefeller; Santos; D. Schmidt; Schual-Berke; Stensen and Sump.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

The Department of General Administration is responsible for the disposal of surplus "personal property" belonging to the state. Surplus computers fall within the definition of personal property used in this context. Before selling or exchanging the personal property, the department must attempt to discover whether it is needed by another state agency. If not, the law permits the department to sell or exchange the personal property or to donate it to certain shelters for homeless persons. The donated personal property must be used to meet the needs of the homeless persons in the shelter.

In rule, the department has adopted a priority list for disposing of personal property belonging to the state. The first priority is sale or transfer to state agencies, including state colleges and universities. Second priority is sale or transfer to other tax-supported educational agencies.

In addition, another law allows the state and any of its political subdivisions to sell, transfer, exchange, lease, or otherwise dispose of any property to another agency of local, state, or federal government. The law describes a process for the disposal of personal property with an estimated value above \$50,000.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Any agency belonging to the executive, legislative, or judicial branches of state government may donate surplus computers and computer-related equipment to school districts and educational service districts. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Department of General Administration will jointly develop and distribute guidelines to implement this authority. The guidelines will give priority to meeting the computer-related needs of students with disabilities, including disabilities that require the portability of laptop computers. The guidelines will consider issues of quality, need, and accountability, and will be distributed by September 1, 1999.

The OSPI may distribute surplus computers and computer-related equipment donated to school districts and educational service districts by state agencies. The office may also provide information to districts about the availability of the computers and computer related equipment. If the office distributes computers, priority will be given to districts seeking computers for students with disabilities, including disabilities that require the portability of laptop computers.

Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Substitute Bill: All state agencies including the Legislature may donate surplus computers and computer related equipment to school districts and educational service districts. The OSPI may distribute both

computers and information about the availability of the computers to districts. Priority in the distribution of computers shall be given to districts seeking computers for students with disabilities, including those disabilities that require the portability of laptop computers.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The passage of this legislation will help clear some of the confusion between the authorities of the Department of Administration and the Department of Information Services over the disposal of surplus computers. It will allow state agencies to donate computers directly to local school districts. OSPI has some concerns about the cost of implementing any distribution authority that the agency might be given.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Patterson, prime sponsor; Pat Kohler and Cindy Runger, Department of General Administration; Karen Davis, Superintendent of Public Instruction; James Watson, Department of Social and Health Services; and Joe Daniels, Seattle Public Schools.