

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia, Washington

Bill Analysis

Bill No. HB 1042

Exempting certain computer software
from public inspection

Brief title

Hearing Date: 1/27/99

Reps Dunn and Wolfe

Sponsor(s)

Staff: Scot MacColl

State Government Committee

Phone: 786-7106

BACKGROUND:

The Open Public Records Act is part of the public disclosure law that makes all public documents subject to release. Numerous exemptions to the public disclosure requirements are provided in statute. Some exemptions relate to records containing personal information and proprietary business information. State and local governments are required to make records specifically listed in statute exempt from public inspection and copying.

Current statute exempts valuable blueprints, designs, drawings, and research data obtained by an agency for five years when the request for disclosure would produce private and public loss. Computer software not specifically exempted in the current statute.

SUMMARY:

A new exemption is added to the public disclosure requirements.

Agency computer software is specifically exempted from public inspection and copying with five years of the request for disclosure when disclosure would produce private and public loss. The exemption applies to computer source code or object code which are the main components of a computer software program.

Records accessible through the computer software program are not included in the exemption and are subject to public disclosure unless otherwise exempt.

FISCAL NOTE: Not requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment session which bill passed.