

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2993

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
State & Local Government, February 23, 2000

Title: An act relating to setting fires for fire fighter instruction.

Brief Description: Setting fires for fire fighter instruction.

Sponsors: Representatives G. Chandler and Cooper.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 2/17/2000, 2/23/2000 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Hale, Kline and McCaslin.

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: Fire protection district fire fighters may, for instruction in methods of fire fighting, set fire to structures without a permit issued under the Washington Clean Air Act. These structures must be located outside the urban growth areas in counties that plan under the Growth Management Act, and outside any city with a population of 10,000 or more in all other counties. Fires may be set without a permit under certain conditions among which are that the fire conforms with any other permits, licenses, or approvals required; the fire is not located in an area that is declared to be in an air pollution episode or any stage of an impaired air quality; and a good faith inspection is conducted to determine if materials containing asbestos are present, the inspection is documented in writing to the appropriate local air authority or the Department of Ecology, and any asbestos found is removed as required by law.

Summary of Amended Bill: The training fire does not have to conform with any other permits, licenses or approvals. It must not be likely to cause an air pollution episode down wind. The good-faith inspection for asbestos required prior to setting a structure on fire is conducted by the fire agency or fire protection district conducting the training fire.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The striking amendment eliminates an unconstitutional reference and recognizes that training fires must not cause air pollution episodes in downwind locations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Fire fighters from urban areas need hands-on experience in fighting real fires. This bill allows that and the sharing of urban expertise with rural fire districts. Fire fighters are well trained in asbestos recognition and removal. Requiring a certified asbestos inspector adds significantly to the cost that has to be borne by the donor of the building and does not provide any significant incremental benefit.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Duane Malo, WA State Assn. of Fire Chiefs (pro).