

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5648

As Passed Senate, March 13, 1999

Title: An act relating to providing consistency in definitions regarding businesses furnishing lodging.

Brief Description: Providing consistency in definitions regarding businesses furnishing lodging.

Sponsors: Senator Haugen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions: 2/23/99, 3/2/99 [DP].

Passed Senate, 3/13/99, 43-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, TRADE, HOUSING & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Benton, Gardner, Hale, Rasmussen, T. Sheldon, West and Winsley.

Staff: David Pringle (786-7448)

Background: Hotels, inns or public lodging houses are defined for some purposes as accommodations having 15 or more rooms.

Hotels must keep records on the arrival and departure of guests for one year. Hotels also have limited liability for the property of guests under several circumstances, including for hotels with safes or for loss or damage to luggage.

It is a gross misdemeanor to obtain services at a hotel by fraud, and for more than \$75 of services it is a felony.

Hotel keepers may have a lien for charges due upon a guest's baggage or other property that is brought into the hotel. After retaining the property for certain amounts of time, a hotel may also give notice and sell the property to cover the charges.

Summary of Bill: Hotels are defined as accommodations with three or more rooms.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Bed and breakfasts are the main beneficiaries. These protections from liability for the property of guests are necessary, as owners are often highly invested in their properties and cannot afford current exposure. This would be of great help to family businesses.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Becky Bogard, WA State Hotel and Motel Assn.; Steven Poole, Chambered Nautilus Bed and Breakfast.