

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1899

As Passed House:

March 9, 2001

Title: An act relating to the use of identifying information in professional licenses.

Brief Description: Prohibiting the use of social security numbers and drivers' license numbers in professional licenses.

Sponsors: By House Committee on State Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Bush, McIntire, Cairnes, Keiser, DeBolt, Hatfield, Benson, Santos, Roach, Miloscia, Barlean, Lovick, Casada, O'Brien, Morell, Simpson, Mielke, Jackley, Pearson, Romero, Eickmeyer, Ruderman, Sump, Linville, D. Schmidt, Campbell, Esser, Hunt, Hurst and Schual-Berke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 2/19/01, 2/23/01 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/9/01, 94-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Prohibits the use of social security numbers and driver's license numbers as part of a professional license.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives McMorris, Republican Co-Chair; Romero, Democratic Co-Chair; Miloscia, Democratic Vice Chair; Schindler, Republican Vice Chair; Haigh, Lambert, McDermott and D. Schmidt.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Federal law (the Privacy Act of 1974) requires all federal and state agencies requesting the disclosure of an individual's Social Security number to notify the individual of the

following: (1) whether disclosure of the number is required or optional; (2) which law or regulation permits the agency to request disclosure of the number; and (3) how the number will be used. The Privacy Act of 1974 also prohibits federal and state agencies from denying any right, benefit, or privilege to an individual because of the individual's refusal to disclose his or her Social Security number unless the disclosure is required by federal statute.

In order to qualify for federal welfare funds, a state must collect the Social Security numbers of any applicant for a professional license, a driver's license, an occupational license, a recreational license, or a marriage license.

Summary of Bill:

Social security numbers and drivers' license numbers may not be used as part of a professional license. Licenses existing on the effective date of the act must comply with this prohibition at the next renewal date.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The substitute bill takes effect January 1, 2002.

Testimony For: (Original bill) This protects holders of professional licenses from identity theft and stalking. Often times the licensee's license number is the same as his or her driver's license number. Since these licenses often must be posted publicly, persons viewing the license have access to the licensee's personal information.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support original bill) Representative Bush, prime sponsor; and Rowland Thompson, Allied Daily Newspapers.

(With concerns original bill) Alan Rathbun and John Swannack, Department of Licensing; and Bob Mitchell, Washington Association of Realtors.