

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1002

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to the public inspection and copying of residential addresses or residential phone numbers of public employees or volunteers of public agencies.

Brief Description: Limiting the public inspection and copying of residential addresses or residential phone numbers of public employees or volunteers of public agencies.

Sponsors: By Representatives Ruderman, Rockefeller, Santos, Lambert, Darneille, Haigh, McIntire and Hunt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 1/24/01, 2/19/01 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/12/01, 98-0.

Passed Senate: 4/6/01, 45-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Exempts public agencies from releasing the residential addresses or phone numbers of public employees or volunteers.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives McMorris, Republican Co-Chair; Romero, Democratic Co-Chair; Miloscia, Democratic Vice Chair; Haigh, Lambert, McDermott and D. Schmidt.

Staff: Serena Dolly (786-7093), Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Passed by initiative in 1972, the Public Disclosure Act requires public agencies to provide full access to public records. An agency provides access by making records available to the public for inspection and copying. The act states that its provisions are to be liberally construed in favor of disclosure, and all public records are subject to

disclosure unless specifically exempted. A number of records are exempted, including:

1. All applications for public employment, including the names of applicants, resumes, and other related materials submitted with respect to an applicant;
2. Personal information in files maintained for employees, appointees, or elected officials of any public agency to the extent that disclosure would violate their rights to privacy; and
3. The residential addresses and residential telephone numbers of employees or volunteers of a public agency which are held by the agency in personnel records, employment or volunteer rosters, or mailing lists of employees or volunteers.

The third exception exempts public agencies from releasing the residential addresses and phone numbers of its employees. Public agencies that have lists of the residential addresses and phone numbers of other agencies' employees, however, are not specifically exempted from releasing the information.

Summary of Bill:

The residential addresses or phone numbers of any public agency's employees or volunteers held by any public agency in personnel records, public employment related records, volunteer rosters, or mailing lists are exempt from public disclosure.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: All public employees should be protected from release of their home addresses or phone numbers. The bill provides a small technical cleanup that will clarify the Legislature's intent to exempt the home addresses and phone numbers of public employees from disclosure, whether held by their own employers or other agencies. The bill will protect employees from a narrow reading of the current exemption.

School employees are required to report suspected child abuse. Parents can get angry, and access to personal information may make school employees reluctant to report abuse. The bill will lessen fears of retaliation.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Ruderman, prime sponsor; Kevin Teeley, Lake Washington Education Association; Bob Maier, Washington Educational Association; Rowland Thompson, Allied Daily Newspapers; and Greg Williamson, Office of the Superintendent

of Public Instruction.