

***Financial Institutions &
Insurance Committee***

HB 2014

Brief Description: *Creating an office of privacy protection.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Simpson, Hatfield, Benson, McIntire, Bush, Ruderman, Schual-Berke, Conway, Santos, Kenney, Lovick, Keiser, Hurst and Kagi.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Creates an office of privacy protection within the office of the Attorney General to monitor and ensure compliance with statutes, rules, and policies pertaining to the right of citizens to keep nonpublic information private and confidential.*

Hearing Date: *2/21/01*

Staff: *Christopher Waraksa (786-5793).*

Background:

Statutory protections for private information are limited in Washington, but include laws, for example, that protect a customer's financial information from being shared between financial institutions and/or the government unless certain requirements are met, require disclosure when credit information is shared with other entities, prohibit obtaining financial information fraudulently, and restrict disclosure of personal health care information.

Another statute, the state identify theft statute, makes repeated acts of identify theft by a business a violation of the Consumer Protection Act. The Attorney General is generally responsible for enforcing the Consumer Protection Act by, for example, bringing actions in the name of the state to restrain prohibited trade practices.

Summary of Bill:

An office of privacy protection is created within the Office of the Attorney General to

monitor and ensure compliance with statutes, rules, and policies pertaining to the right of citizens to keep nonpublic personal information private and confidential. The office must administer a system for recording and posting privacy policies that the law may require to be filed with the office. The office must provide technical assistance and model policies to businesses developing policies regarding the use of personal information. The office must provide consumer education and be a central contact point for consumer information on privacy policies. The office shall assist local prosecutors in coordinating prosecution of crimes related to identity theft.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 15, 2001.

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