

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2886

As Reported by House Committee On:
Local Government & Housing

Title: An act relating to fire detection devices for the hearing impaired.

Brief Description: Requiring installation of fire alarms for hearing impaired persons.

Sponsors: Representatives Simpson, Wood, Cooper, Lovick, Dunshee, Santos, Conway, Chase, Lysen and Kenney.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government & Housing: 2/5/02, 2/7/02 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires that dwelling units occupied by a hearing impaired person must be installed with smoke detection devices for hearing impaired persons.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Edwards, Vice Chair; Mulliken, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, DeBolt, Dunn, Hatfield, Kirby and Sullivan.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Crouse and Mielke.

Staff: Amy Wood (786-7127).

Background:

The State Fire Protection Law requires owners to install smoke detection devices inside all dwelling units that are occupied by persons other than the owner on and after December 31, 1981, or built or manufactured in Washington after December 31, 1980. Tenants are responsible for the maintenance of the smoke detection devices in the dwelling unit, including the replacement of batteries where required for proper operation.

Failure of the owner or the tenant to comply with these provisions will result in a fine of not more than \$200.

The State Residential Landlord-Tenant Law requires the landlord to comply with city, county or state regulations. This includes installing smoke detection devices and ensuring that they operate properly when a tenant moves into the dwelling.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The State Fire Protection Law is amended to require that owners supply and install either permanent or portable smoke detection devices for hearing impaired persons inside all dwelling units that are occupied by a hearing impaired person. The law defines "smoke detection device for hearing impaired persons" as an approved smoke alarm that, when activated by something or products of combustion, produces an audible and a visual warning. The visual warning shall produce a light signal sufficient to warn a hearing impaired person of the presence of fire or smoke.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill allows the owner of the dwelling unit to supply and install a portable smoke detection device for hearing impaired persons as an option to a permanent smoke detection device for hearing impaired persons.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: Nationally there are 28 million persons that are hearing impaired. Current state law only requires the installation of a smoke detection device that does not meet the needs of hearing impaired persons. What this bill does is state that if you are a hearing impaired person then you have the same opportunity to be notified, just like a non-hearing impaired person, in case there is a fire. We want the bill to be flexible so that the owner of the dwelling has options other than having to install a permanent smoke detection device. There are portable smoke detection devices for hearing impaired persons that can be used.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Rep. Simpson, prime sponsor.

