

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2064

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Judiciary, March 27, 2001

Title: An act relating to providing for the availability of online legal research capability on a cost-efficient basis to all residents of the state.

Brief Description: Providing for the availability of online legal research capability on a cost-efficient basis to all residents of the state.

Sponsors: By Representative Carrell.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Judiciary: 3/20/01, 3/27/01 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kline, Chair; Constantine, Vice Chair; Costa, Hargrove, Johnson, Kastama, Long, McCaslin, Thibaudeau and Zarelli.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: Each county with a population of 8,000 or more is required to maintain a county law library. Smaller counties may have a law library which is run by the prosecuting attorney. Counties may also join to form a regional law library. The law libraries must be free for judges, county officials, lawyers, and any others as determined by the law library board. In counties with a population of 300,000 or more, the law library must be free to all users.

\$12 of every new probate or civil filing fee collected in superior court and \$6 of every civil filing fee collected in district court are used for the support of the county law library. Upon approval of the library board of trustees and the county legislative authority, the fee in superior court may be increased to \$15.

Summary of Bill: The State Library, the State Law Library and the Department of General Administration are directed to conduct a study of the feasibility, cost-efficiency, and effectiveness of contracting with a vendor to provide statewide online legal research to any resident of the state.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The state cannot afford to build and maintain full and updated law libraries. We need to use creative ideas to help increase the citizens' access to the courts.

Testimony Against: Some providers are concerned about converting private goods into something available in the public domain. Without assistance in using some of these products, they are of little use.

Testified: Representative Carrell, prime sponsor (pro); Julie Murray, King County (concerns).