

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5376

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 22, 2001

Title: An act relating to household goods carriers operating without a permit.

Brief Description: Restricting telecommunications services for household goods carriers operating without a permit.

Sponsors: Senators Gardner, Horn and Haugen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/7/01, 2/22/01 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5376 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Eide, Finkbeiner, Jacobsen, Kastama, McAuliffe, Oke, Prentice, T. Sheldon and Shin.

Staff: Dean Carlson (786-7305)

Background: The Utilities and Transportation Commission regulates household goods carriers (moving and storage companies) under the motor freight carrier statutes. When a household goods carrier is not in compliance with the commission's regulations, the commission can order the carrier to cease and desist, and then must enforce the cease and desist order in superior court by obtaining an injunction. If the carrier continues to violate the court's order, the commission must file an action of contempt of court.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The superior court of a county has the power, upon petition of the Utilities and Transportation Commission, to order a telecommunications company to change or terminate the phone number of an entity advertising for or providing household goods moving services in violation of permit laws. If a phone number is terminated, it may not be reused by any telecommunications company for one year.

A telecommunications company has 14 days to comply with the court order.

Telecommunications companies must notify a subscriber of the termination within five business days of the termination and enclose a copy of the court order with the termination.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The intent section was removed. It calls for termination of phone numbers rather than telecommunication service. Telecommunication companies must act within 14 days. The provision for petitioning the court for reconsideration is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 1, 2001.

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

Testimony For: Honest businesses become disadvantaged by following the rules. The public can be hurt when their goods are damaged and then the movers cannot be found. Unscrupulous movers lowball the estimate, then add additional charges at the end. These companies operate through their phone number so it cuts them off. This bill is effective when businesses choose to operate illegally. This is necessary legislation to level the playing field.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Gardner, prime sponsor; Larry Pursley, Washington Trucking Association; Jay Lawley, Household Goods Movers' Conference, WTA.