

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5703

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions, March 5, 2001

Title: An act relating to alterations of mobile homes.

Brief Description: Describing what is not an alteration of a mobile home.

Sponsors: Senators Hargrove and Winsley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions: 2/26/01, 3/5/01 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5703 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Benton, Deccio, Fairley, Franklin, Hochstatter, Honeyford, Patterson, Rasmussen, Regala, West and Winsley.

Staff: David Cheal (786-7576)

Background: Manufactured homes are built according to the federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1976. Mobile homes are factory built dwellings built prior to 1976 according to state standards in force at that time. The current federal code preempts state standards. Although similar in many respects, this is a different "building code" than the Uniform Building Code that applies to site-built homes.

The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) is the designated agency to inspect units being built in factories in this state. L&I is also responsible for issuing permits for the alteration of mobile or manufactured homes once they leave the factory, and for inspecting the home when the alteration is complete. To get a permit for alteration, a homeowner or contractor must submit a plan, which in some cases must be accompanied with an engineering analysis. The concern expressed by some mobile/manufactured home owners is that this process is needlessly burdensome and costly, particularly in the case of minor repairs and alterations.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Certain additions and repairs to used mobile homes that are not alterations requiring a permit from L&I are listed. They are:

- auxiliary structures that are independently supported;
- electrical or plumbing repairs or alterations performed by a licensed electrician or plumber with a certificate of competency;
- application of paint or other coatings for waterproofing or maintenance;
- repairs to the roof, siding or other exterior systems where the material used is comparable to the original in performance and weight and does not alter the structural

system of the home, and the work is done by the owner or a registered contractor; and

- other repair or installation that would not require a permit if done on a site built home.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill expressly excludes new mobile/manufactured homes, and allows certain work to be done by owners as well as registered contractors, and still not be subject to the alteration permit process.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 23, 2001.

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

Testimony For: The alteration permit process is too costly and applies to repairs that would not require a permit if the home were a site-built home. The present system can result in an owner having to choose between making needed repairs or alterations and being able to sell their home.

Testimony Against: The bill involves local building officials in approving some alterations to mobile homes. They are familiar with the Uniform Building Code which applies to site-built homes, but not familiar with the Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act which applies to manufactured homes. The Department of Labor and Industries is working on the problems that led to this bill, but believes this bill is inappropriate and ineffective.

Testified: Calvin Larsen; Bob Mitchell, WA Assn. of Realtors (pro); Marguerite Glover, Sequim Assn. of Realtors (pro); Ray Munson, MHOA (pro); George Sumner, mobile home owner (pro); Douglas Clark (pro); Dan Sexton, WA St. Assn. of Plumbers & Pipefitters (concerns); Patrick Woods, Dan Sevik, L&I (con); Mike Ryherd, WMHA (concerns).