

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 6700

C 336 L 02

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Limiting the publication of personal information of law enforcement, corrections officers, or court employees.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Senators Finkbeiner, Roach, Oke and McAuliffe).

Senate Committee on Judiciary

House Committee on Judiciary

Background: Over the interim, the names, telephone numbers, residential addresses, birth dates, social security numbers and other personal information about police officers and their relatives were published over the internet by an individual who was critical of law enforcement personnel. Concern exists that inappropriate dissemination of this information through the internet invades privacy rights and has caused harm for law enforcement personnel, court employees and volunteers for law enforcement agencies and courts.

Courts in Washington are expected to decide issues involving privacy interests, freedom of expression, and appropriate remedies for claims related to internet postings of personal information concerning law enforcement personnel and their relatives.

Summary: Unless exempt by law or court order, a person or organization who sells, trades, gives, publishes, distributes or otherwise releases the residential address, residential telephone number, birth date or social security number of any law enforcement-related, corrections officer-related, or court-related employee, volunteer or someone with a similar name can be liable for damages if (1) intent to harm or intimidate can be shown, (2) the person or organization categories the law enforcement-related, corrections officer-related, or court-related employee or volunteer by that occupation, and (3) the person or organization did not obtain express written permission.

The prosecuting attorney or person harmed by a violation of this provision may initiate a civil action to enjoin the violation. A law enforcement-related, corrections officer-related, or court-related employee or volunteer who suffers damages as result of a violation may recover actual damages, attorneys' fees, and costs. A court may issue a permanent injunction against a person or organization engaged in the violation.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0	
House	97	0	(House amended)
Senate	45	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 13, 2002

