

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 1759-S

March 28, 2002

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,

The House of Representatives of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to section 4, Substitute House Bill No. 1759 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to the sale of hypodermic syringes;"

This bill authorizes the sale and possession of hypodermic syringes and needles to reduce the transmission of bloodborne diseases, such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis B and C.

Subsection 4(3) of the bill would have limited sales of syringes to the number of used hypodermic syringes and needles returned by the individual at the time of the sale. This provision would have the consequence of requiring *all* legal users of syringes to exchange their used injection equipment in order to purchase necessary supplies. Particularly affected by this requirement would be those individuals who are diabetic and insulin dependent.

Section 4 would have effectively made pharmacies universal disposal sites for used equipment. Pharmacy personnel would have been required to handle and count used needles, exposing them to risk of infection. That would be an unacceptable safety risk. Also, in many instances, pharmacies are not equipped to handle this disposal challenge or expense.

For these reasons, I have vetoed section 4 of Substitute House Bill No. 1759.

With the exception of section 4, Substitute House Bill No. 1759 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor