

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 2663-S2

April 3, 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 1, Second Substitute House Bill No. 2663 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to occupational diseases affecting fire fighters;"

Second Substitute House Bill No. 2663 creates a rebuttable prima facie presumption that certain heart problems, cancer and infectious diseases are occupational diseases for fire fighters covered by industrial insurance. This is a law that I strongly support.

However, the assumptions in section 1 of this bill have not been clearly validated by science and medicine. Allowing those assumptions to become law could have several unintended consequences, including modifying the legal basis of the presumptions in section 2 of the bill, providing an avenue for the allowance of disease claims in other industries; and unnecessarily limiting the use of new scientific information in administering occupational disease claims.

For these reasons, I have vetoed section 1 of Second Substitute House Bill No. 2663.

With the exception of section 1, Second Substitute House Bill No. 2663 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gary Locke  
Governor