

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 5187-S

May 11, 2001

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Substitute Senate Bill No. 5187 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to updating creditor/debtor personal property exemptions;"

Substitute Senate Bill No. 5187 would have increased and expanded the exemptions from execution, attachment or garnishment for certain household goods, vehicles, and certain other assets.

I agree with the underlying theory that prompted this bill. However, because this bill lacks an exemption for the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) for the collection of court-ordered child support payments, it is not good public policy. The primary financial responsibility of debtors should be that of their dependent children.

This legislation would have prevented DSHS from taking collection action against certain liquid assets of a child support debtor, with no consideration of the needs of dependent children who do not reside with the debtor. The result would have been a net loss of support available for children and custodial parents.

DSHS provided the appropriate legislative committees with language that would have corrected the defects of this bill. If this bill is passed in the next legislative session with the corrective language, I will be glad to sign it.

For these reasons I have vetoed Substitute Senate Bill No. 5187 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor