

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2663

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 19, 2004

Title: An act relating to use of respectful language in the Revised Code of Washington and the Washington Administrative Code.

Brief Description: Requiring use of respectful language in the Revised Code of Washington regarding individuals with disabilities.

Sponsors: Representatives Haigh, Armstrong, McCoy, Holmquist, O'Brien, Boldt, Morrell, Jarrett, Wallace, Delvin, Moeller, Priest, Darneille, Conway, D. Simpson, Kagi, Hunter, Clements, Wood, Sullivan, Dickerson, G. Simpson, Hunt, Skinner, Cody, Ormsby, Chase, Hankins, Pettigrew, Kenney, Tom, Nixon, Kessler, Miloscia, Linville, Romero, Roach and Hudgins.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/19/04 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Winsley, Vice Chair; Brandland, Franklin, Keiser, Parlette and Thibaudeau.

Staff: Rhoda Donkin (786-7198)

Background: The Revised Code of Washington and the Washington Administrative Code have language that is considered demeaning and ostracizing to people with disabilities. Such terms as handicapped, crippled, and retarded are used in many sections of the codes, some dating back 100 years. There is widespread interest in changing these references to terminology that emphasizes the individual first before identifying anything else about the person.

Summary of Bill: The Code Reviser must avoid references to certain words that have been frequently used to describe individuals with disabilities. The specific terms are: disabled, developmentally disabled, mentally disabled, mentally retarded, handicapped, cripple and crippled.

The terms must be avoided in future laws as well as replaced in existing statutes as those statutes are amended by law. The replacement terms are: "individuals with disabilities," "individuals with developmental disabilities," "individuals with mental retardation."

All agency orders creating new rules or amending existing rules will accordingly use this language.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: No one.

Signed In/Did Not Testify: PRO: Skip Dreps, NW Chapter Paralyzed Vets of America; Robert Wandrey, Shelley Longacre, Brad Young, Dwayne Canfield, Cherie Tessier, Diana Robishaw, People First; Mae Boettcher.