

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6499

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Technology & Communications, January 29, 2004

**Title:** An act relating to establishing a local wireless network in the legislative building.

**Brief Description:** Establishing a local wireless network in the legislative building.

**Sponsors:** Senators Schmidt, Poulsen, Esser and Eide.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Technology & Communications: 1/26/04, 1/29/04 [DPS-WM].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATIONS

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6499 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Schmidt, Chair; Esser, Vice Chair; Berkey, Eide, McCaslin, Poulsen and Stevens.

**Staff:** William Bridges (786-7424)

**Background:** A wireless network uses radio frequencies to link computers and peripheral devices, which allows users to be mobile. Wireless Fidelity or "Wi-Fi" is a technology standard used in wireless networks.

As part of the 2004 legislative building rehabilitation project, the Joint Legislative Systems Committee and the Department of General Administration are installing the wiring and antenna system for a wireless network in the Capitol Building.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The Joint Legislative Systems Committee (JLSC), the Department of Information Services (DIS), and the Department of General Administration (GA) must deploy a pilot wireless network in the Capitol Building in 2004. Network coverage must be expanded to the state Capitol campus following a schedule determined by the JLSC, DIS, and GA. The JLSC, DIS, and GA may choose a private vendor to deploy or provide network services.

The JLSC, DIS, and GA must determine the means by which persons may use the network; however, access must proceed in three phases: phase one, legislative officers and staff; phase two, executive officers and staff; and phase three, the public. The JLSC, DIS, and GA must consult with the State Library in determining the conditions for public access to the network.

An intent section declares the importance of fast and convenient access to information.

The JLSC, DIS, and GA must present a deployment report to the Senate and House technology committees by January 10, 2005. The report must make recommendations and report fiscal implications of expanding the network to additional state Capitol campus facilities.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** DIS is added to the list of entities that must deploy the wireless network. A technical change is made that more accurately describes the scope of the network. JLSC, DIS, and GA are required to make recommendations and report fiscal implications of expanding the network to additional state Capitol campus facilities.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 23, 2004.

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

**Testimony For:** Wi-Fi access locations, or hot spots, on the Capitol campus will offer fast and convenient access to the Internet. DIS is fully supportive of the idea, but advises that security, financial, and agency delegation issues be examined. Private vendors are willing to operate the network. JLSC has already submitted a supplemental budget request to set up a distributed antenna system in the Capitol Building. GA is excited about the technology but has two concerns: (1) GA does not have the expertise to operate a Wi-Fi network, and (2) GA wants to know the up-front capital costs and risks of setting up a Wi-Fi network.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Senator Schmidt, prime sponsor (pro); Robert Bain, NoWyr, Inc. (pro); Stuart McKee, Director, Department of Information Services (pro); Lenore Miller, Department of General Administration (concerns); Cathy Munson, Director, Legislative Service Center (pro).