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HOUSE BILL 1717

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State of Washington                      58th Legislature                      2003 Regular Session

By Representatives Cody and Campbell

Read first time 02/05/2003. Referred to Committee on Judiciary.

1            AN ACT Relating to separate billing of tenants for water and  
2 wastewater services by a landlord; and adding a new section to chapter  
3 59.18 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 59.18 RCW  
6 to read as follows:

7            (1) A landlord may charge a tenant separately for water or  
8 wastewater services by allocating the charges separately through a  
9 ratio utility billing system that complies with this section.

10           (2) A landlord who allocates charges separately for water or  
11 wastewater services may allocate the costs to each tenant by using one  
12 or more of the following ratio utility billing system methods:

13           (a) Per tenant;

14           (b) Proportionately by liveable square footage;

15           (c) Per type of unit;

16           (d) Per number of water fixtures; or

17           (e) Any other method that fairly allocates the charges.

18           (3) A landlord who charges separately for water or wastewater  
19 services must comply with the following conditions:

1 (a) The total charges to the tenants in a building shall not exceed  
2 the total charges paid by the landlord for water or wastewater services  
3 for the building plus an administrative fee for actual administrative  
4 costs incurred by the landlord;

5 (b) The rental agreement shall contain a disclosure, which must be  
6 initialed by the tenant, that notifies the tenant of the separate  
7 billing for water and wastewater services, provides a specific  
8 description of the ratio utility billing method used for allocating  
9 water and wastewater charges among tenants, states the amount of any  
10 administrative fee charged for the separate billing, and informs the  
11 tenant of the right of access to the information specified in (d) of  
12 this subsection;

13 (c) A landlord must provide each tenant in existing tenancies with  
14 at least ninety days' notice before instituting a ratio utility billing  
15 system. The notice shall contain the information required under (b) of  
16 this subsection;

17 (d) Upon request of a tenant, the landlord shall provide a copy of  
18 the actual utility bill for the building along with each apportioned  
19 utility bill. Upon request of a tenant, the landlord shall also  
20 provide past copies of actual utility bills for any period of the  
21 tenancy for which the tenant received an apportioned utility bill.  
22 Past copies of utility bills must be provided for the preceding two  
23 years or from the time the current landlord acquired the building,  
24 whichever is most recent.

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