

SB 5477-S - DIGEST

(SEE ALSO PROPOSED 2ND SUB)

Finds that there are factors unique to the relationship between a manufactured/mobile home tenant and a manufactured/mobile home community landlord. Once occupancy has commenced, the difficulty and expense in moving and relocating a manufactured/mobile home can affect the operation of market forces and lead to an inequality of the bargaining position of the parties. Once occupancy has commenced, a tenant may be subject to violations of the manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act or the consumer protection act without an adequate remedy at law. This act is created for the purpose of protecting the public, fostering fair and honest competition, and regulating the factors unique to the relationship between the manufactured/mobile home tenant and the manufactured/mobile home community landlord.

Finds that taking legal action against a manufactured/mobile home community landlord for violations of the manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act can be a costly and lengthy process, and that many people cannot afford to pursue a court process to vindicate statutory rights. Manufactured/mobile home community landlords will also benefit by having access to a process that resolves disputes quickly and efficiently.

Declares an intent to provide an equitable as well as a less costly and more efficient way for manufactured/mobile home tenants and manufactured/mobile home community landlords to resolve disputes, and to provide a mechanism for state authorities to quickly locate manufactured/mobile home community landlords.

Declares an intent to authorize the department of licensing to register manufactured/mobile home communities and collect a registration fee.

Declares an intent to authorize the attorney general to:
(1) Produce and distribute educational materials regarding the manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act and the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program created in this act;

(2) Administer the dispute resolution program by taking complaints, conducting investigations, making determinations, issuing fines and other penalties, and participating in administrative dispute resolutions, when necessary, when there are alleged violations of the manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act or the consumer protection act; and

(3) Collect and annually report upon data related to disputes and violations, and make recommendations on modifying chapter 59.20 RCW, to the appropriate committees of the legislature.

Requires the attorney general to administer a manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program.

Appropriates the sum of four hundred thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, from the general fund to the attorney general for the purpose of implementing and operating the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program.