

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SB 5038

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### PARTIAL VETO C 549 L 09 Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Making technical corrections to gender-based terms.

**Sponsors:** Senators Kohl-Welles, King, Keiser, Franklin and Pridemore; by request of Statute Law Committee.

**Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection**  
**House Committee on Judiciary**

**Background:** Since 1983 state law requires that all statutes be written in gender-neutral terms, unless a specification of gender is intended. In 2007 the Legislature passed ESB 5063, an act relating to removing gender references. The act changed gender-specific terms to gender-neutral terms in several chapters of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), including those chapters dealing with firefighters, police officers, bondspersons, and material suppliers.

The Legislature directed the Code Reviser, in consultation with the Statute Law Committee, to develop and implement a plan to correct gender-specific references in the entire RCW. The Code Reviser must make annual legislative recommendations to make the RCW completely gender-neutral by June 30, 2015.

**Summary:** Gender-specific terms and references are made gender-neutral in several Titles of the RCW. For example, references to "man" or "men" are changed to "person" or "persons," "councilman" is changed to "councilmember," and "chairman" is changed to "chair." Titles relating to local and state government and insurance are included and are made gender-neutral throughout. Other code sections are included, such as sections that contain business regulations, to modify specific references to "man" or "men."

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	45	3	
House	77	20	(House amended)
Senate	40	4	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** July 26, 2009

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Partial Veto Summary:** The Governor vetoed 15 sections due to conflicting amendments in other legislation.