

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5644

As of February 13, 2009

Title: An act relating to home inspectors.

Brief Description: Concerning home inspectors.

Sponsors: Senators Parlette and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection: 2/12/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & CONSUMER PROTECTION

Staff: Kathleen Buchli (786-7488)

Background: In 2008 the Legislature passed ESSB 6606 which establishes licensing requirements for home inspectors. The bill created the Home Inspector Advisory Licensing Board (Board) to establish rules for adoption by the Director of the Department of Licensing (DOL); establish minimum qualifications for licensing applicants; approve the method by which exams will be administered; approve exams prepared by other entities to be used by DOL; set the time and place for exams with approval of DOL; and establish and review standards of professional conduct, practice, and ethics for adoption by DOL.

ESSB 6606 established requirements for a person to meet to become licensed as a home inspector, including a requirement of 120 hours of classroom instruction, 40 hours of field training, and passage of a written exam. The bill also stated that a home inspector must meet the minimum standards of practice developed by the Board which must include looking for certain fire and safety hazards.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): The Board is authorized to approve qualified instructional courses statewide, including distance learning classes when appropriate. The requirement of 120 hours of classroom instruction is changed to 120 hours of instruction of which 20 hours may be distance learning.

Appropriation: None.

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.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, except for section 2 which takes effect July 1, 2010.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This is a constituent request for a person who needs to meet the hourly requirement and would like that to occur online. This proposed substitute will not help the constituent and perhaps this bill should not go forward.

CON: The time constraints of the Board prevent them from supporting the bill. To give distance learning vendors the ability to provide a partial distance learning course would disrupt current vendors who are preparing for the bill right now. The program needs to get off the ground and chances should be made down the road after the dust settles from their current efforts.

OTHER: The laws need to change in regards to exposure of mold. More protections for the public are needed. Home inspectors cannot tell soft rot fungus from other molds and to not look for it is wrong.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Parlette, prime sponsor.

CON: Bruce MacKintosh, Home Inspector Board.

OTHER: Teresa McCormick, homeowner; Rebecca Woepfel, taxpayer.