

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6239

As Passed Senate, February 11, 2010

Title: An act relating to making technical corrections to gender-based terms.

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

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, Gordon and Fraser; by request of Statute Law Committee).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection: 1/14/10, 1/18/10 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 2/11/10, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & CONSUMER PROTECTION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6239 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Kohl-Welles, Chair; Keiser, Vice Chair; Holmquist, Ranking Minority Member; Franklin, Honeyford, King and Kline.

Staff: Kathleen Buchli (786-7488)

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. ESB 5063 also 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. The first such bill was passed by the Legislature during the 2009 Legislative Session.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Gender-specific terms and references are made gender-neutral in several titles of the RCW. Titles relating to criminal procedure, probate and trust, district

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and juvenile courts, aeronautics, agriculture, state government, motor vehicles, public highways and transportation, insurance, labor, unemployment compensation, industrial insurance, fire protection districts, port districts, public utility districts, boundaries and plats, and landlord and tenant are included and are made gender-neutral throughout.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, except for section 9077 which takes effect July 1, 2010.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: This project may be completed before the 2015 deadline. This bill is similar to the bill passed by the Legislature last year. In producing this bill, outside agencies and interested parties were consulted. References to warehousemen/warehouse worker can be pulled from the bill this year and addressed during the 2010 interim.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Kyle Thiessen, Statute Law Committee.