

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1393

As Reported by House Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections

Title: An act relating to providing information to assist in unemployment insurance overpayment recovery.

Brief Description: Providing information to assist in unemployment insurance overpayment recovery.

Sponsors: Representatives Hunt, Chandler, Takko, Kristiansen, Blake, Warnick, Sells, Van De Wege and Wylie; by request of Employment Security Department.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Operations & Elections: 2/7/13, 2/14/13 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife to disclose personally identifying information of persons who acquire recreational or commercial hunting, fishing, or wildlife viewing licenses to the Employment Security Department.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Carlyle, Fitzgibbon, Orwall and Van De Wege.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Buys, Ranking Minority Member; Taylor, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Kristiansen and Manweller.

Staff: Caitlin Forsyth (786-5793) and Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

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.

The Employment Security Department (ESD) administers unemployment compensation in Washington. Overpayment of unemployment compensation sometimes occurs when a claimant is paid compensation that is later denied for the same time period in which the payment was made. If an individual receives more unemployment compensation than he or she is entitled to, the ESD attempts to contact the individual and collect the overpayment. Currently, in its attempt to contact individuals that owe overpayment, the ESD compares its list of owing individuals with nine other state and national databases including the Washington State Department of Corrections, the Washington State Department of Health, the United States Department of Labor's National Directory of New Hires, and the United States Postal Service.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) issues commercial and recreational licenses to individuals wishing to hunt, fish, or view wildlife in their natural habitat. The Department requires that a license applicant provide current contact information and a valid social security or driver's license number.

The Public Records Act (Act) requires that most records maintained by state, county, and city governments, and all special purpose districts be made available to members of the public. Unless an exemption applies, agencies must make all public records available for public inspection and copying. Under the Act, the Department is required to disclose a commercial or recreational licensee's name, address, and type of license. Under an exemption, however, the licensee's social security or driver's license number is not included in this disclosure.

Summary of Bill:

The Department must disclose personally identifying information to the ESD, including social security numbers, of persons who acquire recreational or commercial licenses from the Department.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill will not create overpayment accounts that do not already exist. This bill will not result in an individual losing a fishing or hunting license if there is no other reason to lose the license. Currently there are approximately 20,000 active accounts at the ESD amounting to \$50 million in unemployment overpayment. Already, the ESD can see all fish and wildlife licensee information with the exception of social security numbers. This bill helps the ESD verify, using a social security number comparison, that the owing individual

with a new address on the Department database is the owing individual and not another individual with the same name.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Neil Gorrell, Employment Security Department.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.