

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6165

As Passed House - Amended:
March 1, 2016

Title: An act relating to short-barreled rifles.

Brief Description: Concerning short-barreled rifles.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Takko, Pearson, Sheldon and Benton).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Judiciary: 2/23/16, 2/26/16 [DPA].

Floor Activity:

Passed House - Amended: 3/1/16, 93-4.

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill
(As Amended by House)**

- Expands authorized activities with respect to short-barreled rifles and their parts.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Jinkins, Chair; Kilduff, Vice Chair; Rodne, Ranking Minority Member; Shea, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Goodman, Haler, Hansen, Kirby, Klippert, Kuderer, Muri, Orwall and Stokesbary.

Staff: Ellie Page (786-7291) and Edie Adams (786-7180).

Background:

The National Firearms Act (NFA) regulates the manufacture, transport, importation, and possession of certain firearms, including short-barreled rifles, destructive devices, and other weapons. A "short-barreled rifle" is defined as a rifle having a barrel, or barrels, of less than 16 inches in length or a weapon made from a rifle if the modified rifle is less than 26 inches

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in length or has barrels of less than 16 inches in length. Firearms regulated under the NFA must be registered with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record (NFRTR), and only manufacturers, makers, importers, and certain governmental entities may register NFA firearms. A person who possesses a firearm registered in the NFRTR must have proof of registration that may be made available upon request of an ATF officer.

To acquire or make a NFA firearm, an individual must meet certain requirements, including obtain prior approval from the ATF for the transfer or registration of the item, attain a certification from the local chief law enforcement officer, undergo a background check, and pay a \$200 tax. The ATF will not grant approval if the making or transfer of the weapon is in violation of any federal, state, or local law.

In Washington it is unlawful to manufacture, own, buy, sell, loan, furnish, assemble, repair, possess, or control a machine gun, a short-barreled shotgun, a short-barreled rifle, or parts of any of these firearms. In 2014, however, Washington legalized a person's ability to possess, transport, acquire, and transfer a short-barreled rifle if done in compliance with federal law.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The statute governing short-barreled rifles is restructured, and additional activities related to short-barreled rifles are authorized.

If in compliance with applicable federal law, it is not unlawful for a person to manufacture, own, assemble, or repair a short-barreled rifle. A person may also manufacture, own, buy, sell, loan, furnish, transport, assemble, or repair, or have in his or her possession or under his or her control, any part designed exclusively for use in a short-barreled rifle or used in converting a weapon into a short-barreled rifle.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The bill will clarify an imperfection in the law enacted in 2014 to allow persons to perform the same activities with short-barreled rifles as are authorized under the NFA. For example, licensed manufacturers in compliance with the NFA will be able to manufacture short-barreled rifles, and persons in compliance with the NFA will be able to convert a rifle into a short-barreled rifle for recreational purposes such as hunting and for competitions.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Takko, prime sponsor; and Andrew Mesojednik.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.