

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6033

As of January 29, 2024

Title: An act relating to ceremonial open carry on the Washington state capitol campus.

Brief Description: Concerning ceremonial open carry on the Washington state capitol campus.

Sponsors: Senators Braun, Dozier, Gildon, Holy, Kuderer, Schoesler, Wagoner, Warnick and Wilson, J..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 1/29/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Exempts uniformed color guards from the prohibitions against carrying firearms and other weapons on capitol grounds and related facilities.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Staff: Joe McKittrick (786-7287)

Background: State law regulates locations where firearms and other weapons are carried and the manner in which they are carried or displayed. It is a crime to knowingly open carry a firearm or other weapon while knowingly within the following locations:

- the west state capitol grounds, any building on the state capitol grounds, any state legislative office, or any location of a public state legislative hearing or meeting during that meeting or hearing; and
- local government buildings used in connection with meetings of the governing body of the local government or any location of a public meeting or hearing of the governing body of the local government during the hearing or meeting.

A first violation of any of these prohibitions is a misdemeanor and any second or subsequent violation is a gross misdemeanor.

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

These prohibitions do not apply to the lawful concealed carry of a firearm by a person who has a valid concealed pistol license, nor do they apply to duly authorized law enforcement officers and personnel when carrying the firearm or weapon in conformance with their agency's policy or members of the armed forces of the United States or the state of Washington when carrying a firearm or other weapon in the discharge of official duty or traveling to or from official duty.

Summary of Bill: The prohibitions against the open carrying of firearms and other weapons do not apply to uniformed color guards and honor guards affiliated with a veterans' service organization recognized by the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs, or affiliated with the National Sons of the American Revolution or Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War while actively participating in, or walking to or leaving a permitted event.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: Pro: This is a straightforward bill that allows ceremonial guards to carry firearms that are not operational. Veteran honor guards provide service to all of Washington honoring veterans. Presenting colors is a long-honored tradition. The rifles used in these ceremonies are a visual representation of the service our veterans provided protecting this country. These rifles are painted white and are not operational. Honor guards should be allowed to provide their services while on the capitol campus.

Con: None.

Other: None.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator John Braun, Prime Sponsor; Allen Acosta, Veterans Legislative Coalition .

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.