

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5031

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, January 19, 2009

Title: An act relating to rental or lease of armories.

Brief Description: Concerning rental or lease of armories.

Sponsors: Senators Fairley, Hobbs, Swecker, Shin, Sheldon, Berkey, Haugen, Hatfield and McAuliffe; by request of Military Department and Joint Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 1/15/09, 1/19/09 [DP, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; McDermott, Pridemore and Swecker.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Roach, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Edward Redmond (786-7471)

Background: The Military Department (MD) manages 33 readiness centers, also known as armories, throughout the state. The National Guard (NG) utilizes armories when conducting training. An organization may, at the Adjutant General's discretion, use armories for its community activities when the activities do not impair the NG's mission, the activities meet MD regulations, and the organization pays a fixed rental charge. Currently, armory use is limited to casual civic purposes, amateur and professional sports, and theatrical events.

Revenue from the rental of armories is deposited into accounts for each particular armory. The monies from these accounts are used specifically for the maintenance and upgrade costs or to purchase goods and services such as chairs, televisions, and janitorial services, which are made available for public use.

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.

Summary of Bill: Armories may be rented for public and private use. The Adjutant General determines the rental charge for each armory.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Current language in RCW 38.20.010 is subject to a restrictive interpretation that, if followed, would limit the kinds of activities for which the MD can rent its armories. Broadening the definition for armory use to "public and private" allows the MD to advertise armory rentals to a greater consumer market. Armory rental and lease revenues are used for armory maintenance and operation expenses. Hence, expanding the use of armories will further reduce the need for appropriations from the State General Fund.

Removing the "fixed" rental charge language will permit the Adjutant General to prepare "a schedule of rental charges" and periodically adjust the schedule based on fluctuations in overhead costs such as utilities expenses.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Gordon Toney, Washington Military Department; Ted Wicorek, Veteran Legislative Coalition.