

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2350

As Reported By House Committee On:
Law & Justice

Title: An act relating to records of pistol purchases or transfers.

Brief Description: Eliminating the authority of the department of licensing to keep records of pistol purchases or transfers.

Sponsors: Representatives Radcliff, McMorris, Campbell, Koster, Thompson, D. Schmidt, Blanton, Schoesler, Honeyford, Johnson, D. Sommers, Hargrove, Sheldon, Smith, Pennington, Mulliken and McMahan.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Law & Justice: 1/24/96, 1/30/96 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Sheahan, Chairman; Delvin, Vice Chairman; Hickel, Vice Chairman; Dellwo, Ranking Minority Member; Costa, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell; Carrell; Chappell; Cody; Lambert; McMahan; Morris; Murray; Robertson; Smith and Sterk.

Staff: Bill Perry (786-7123).

Background: Under the state's firearms law, records of certain transactions involving firearms are maintained by the Department of Licensing (DOL).

Among the records that DOL maintains are applications for concealed pistol licenses, applications for alien firearm licenses, applications to purchase pistols, and records of pistol transfers. Generally, these records are exempt from the public records law and may be released only to law enforcement agencies or the Department of Corrections.

Issuers of pistol or alien firearm licenses and dealers who sell or transfer pistols are required to send copies of the records of these transactions to DOL. A dealers is also required to send copies of records of pistol sales to the local law enforcement agency in the jurisdiction in which the purchaser lives.

Summary of Bill: The authority of DOL to maintain records of applications to purchase pistols and of pistol sales and transfers is removed. Dealers are no longer required to send copies of the records of such transactions to DOL. Copies must still be sent to local law enforcement agencies.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: DOL can't keep up with the paperwork, and the records are incomplete to begin with. The records are of little value to law enforcement. Federal records are much more useful. The bill will save time and money.

Testimony Against: We need a centralized record-keeping system. The current system should be improved, not abolished.

Testified: Representative Radcliff, prime sponsor; Colonel Mel Pfankuche, Colonel Mel Pfankuche & Associates, Inc. (pro); Greg Dahlgren, Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms (pro); Linda Bremer, Department of Licensing (pro); Brian Judy, National Rifle Association (pro); and Peggy Saari, League of Women Voters of Washington (con).