

HOUSE BILL REPORT

E2SSB 6556

As Reported By House Committee On:

Government Operations

Title: An act relating to public electronic access to government records and information.

Brief Description: Enhancing public electronic access to government information.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senator Sutherland).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Operations: 2/20/96, 2/23/96 [DPA].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Reams, Chairman; Cairnes, Vice Chairman; Goldsmith, Vice Chairman; Rust, Ranking Minority Member; Scott, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Conway; R. Fisher; Hargrove; Honeyford; Hymes; Scheuerman; D. Schmidt; Van Luven and Wolfe.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Mulliken.

Staff: Scott White (786-7153).

Background: In response to the increased demand for electronic access to public information and records, the Legislature created the Public Information Access Policy Task Force in the 1994 Special Session. The task force released its findings and recommendations in December 1995.

Summary of Amended Bill: Provisions are established relating to public access of electronic public records.

The Legislature and legislative agencies, the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, and all superior and district courts are required to plan for and implement processes for making judicial information available electronically.

Within existing resources, state agencies are required to plan for and implement processes for making information available electronically, with an emphasis on two-way interaction, current information, coordinating technology planning with other agencies, maintaining accuracy, and protecting privacy.

The Information Services Board is directed to develop statewide technical standards and to require state agencies to consider electronic public access needs when planning new information systems or major upgrades of systems.

The Department of Information Services is directed to include goals for electronic access to public records, information, and services as a part of the state strategic information technology plan.

Each state agency is directed to include goals and an implementation strategy for providing electronic access to public information and services as a part of its own strategic information technology plan.

A pilot project to design and test an electronic information locator system allowing members of the public to locate and access electronic public records is to be cooperatively designed and implemented by the State Library, with the assistance of the Department of Information Services and the State Archives.

Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Second Substitute Bill: The provisions relating to electronic access of information are required, instead of encouraged.

The Legislature and the courts are included with state agencies in being required to plan for and implement processes for making information available electronically.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately, except section 5 of the act, which takes effect June 30, 1997. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Testimony For: This bill reflects the recommendations of the task force. It is a good effort in setting policies to facilitate citizen access to government.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Sutherland, prime sponsor; Representative Jim Horn; Nancy Zussy, State Library; and Sam Hunt, Department of Information Services.