

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1200

C 98 L 97

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Revising the code of ethics for municipal officers.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Government Administration (originally sponsored by Representatives Buck, D. Schmidt and Dunn).

House Committee on Government Administration
Senate Committee on Government Operations

Background: Municipal officers are prohibited by the municipal code of ethics from having a beneficial interest in a contract, either directly or indirectly, which is made by, through, or under the supervision of that officer. A municipal officer is any elected or appointed officer of a unit of local government and includes any deputies and assistants of that officer.

A number of exemptions to this prohibition have been established, and some of these exemptions pertain to the hiring of a spouse of a municipal officer. All of these particular spousal exemptions apply only to school districts. There are no spousal exemptions from the prohibition against a municipal officer having a beneficial interest in a contract for any other type of municipality.

Summary: A public hospital district may employ the spouse of a public hospital district commissioner without a violation of the municipal code of ethics occurring if (1) the spouse was employed by the district before the initial election of the commissioner; (2) the terms of the contract are commensurate with provisions for similar employees; (3) the commissioner's interest is disclosed in the public record prior to the letting or continuation of the contract; and (4) the commissioner does not vote on the authorization, approval, or ratification of the contract or any of its conditions.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 98 0

Senate 47 0

Effective: July 27, 1997