

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1751

As Passed House

January 16, 1998

Title: An act relating to communications between state employees and legislators.

Brief Description: Protecting communications between state employees and legislators.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Government Administration (originally sponsored by Representatives Zellinsky, Clements, L. Thomas, Fisher, Sheldon, Chandler, Carrell, Grant, Ballasiotes, K. Schmidt, Radcliff, Johnson, Cooke, Reams, Smith, Van Luven, Thompson, Lambert, Wensman, O'Brien, Boldt, Wolfe, Dunn and Schoesler).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Administration: 2/26/97, 3/4/97 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/11/97, 96-0;

Passed House: 1/16/98, 93-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives D. Schmidt, Chairman; D. Sommers, Vice Chairman; Scott, Ranking Minority Member; Gardner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Doumit; Dunn; Dunshee; Murray; Reams; Smith; L. Thomas; Wensman and Wolfe.

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background: State employees are sometimes told that all communications with legislators must be reported to their superior, the agency head, or other similar person.

Summary of Bill: Any state employee may communicate with a legislator without reporting the communication to a superior, agency head, or otherwise.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Supervisors can make veiled threats. This infringes on the right of people to talk to their elected officials and prevents legislators from obtaining valuable information. Open communication should be encouraged.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Zellinsky, prime sponsor; Lynn McKinnon, Washington Public Employees Association; Margaret Mulligan, Washington State Liquor Control Board; Bill Casey; Bill Hanson, Washington State Troopers Association; and Bill Ford, Washington State Lieutenant and Captains Association.