

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1200

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations, March 21, 1997

Title: An act relating to the code of ethics for municipal officers.

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

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

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 3/21/97 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chair; Hale, Vice Chair; Anderson, Haugen, Horn and Patterson.

Staff: Kathleen Healy (786-7403)

Background: The municipal code of ethics prohibits municipal officers from having a direct or indirect beneficial interest in a contract 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 of Bill: A public hospital district may employ the spouse of a public hospital district commissioner without violating the municipal code of ethics 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.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: No one.