

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5244

As Passed Senate, March 12, 1997

Title: An act relating to disabled persons' parking permits.

Brief Description: Allowing trained volunteers to enforce the disabled persons' parking permit law.

Sponsors: Senators Oke, Fairley, Winsley, Deccio, Prince, Horn, Benton, Swecker, Finkbeiner, Sellar, McDonald and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 2/20/97, 3/3/97 [DP].
Passed Senate, 3/12/97, 46-1.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Johnson, Vice Chair; Fairley, Goings, Hargrove, Haugen, Kline, Long and McCaslin.

Staff: Mal Murphy (786-7412)

Background: It is a parking infraction, with a penalty of \$175, for anyone to park in a place reserved for the physically disabled, without a special license plate or placard authorizing them to do so. Citations may be issued only by authorized law enforcement officers.

Summary of Bill: Law enforcement agencies authorized to enforce parking laws may appoint volunteers to issue citations for illegally parking in a place reserved for the physically disabled. Volunteers must be at least 21 years of age, and must be provided training by the appointing law enforcement agency. A citation issued by a volunteer so appointed has the same force and effect as one issued by an officer.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Oregon has a similar program and the number of violations has been reduced. Raising the fine to \$175 has not solved the problem. Disabled can help out on this. The bill offers some existing potential for volunteerism and community policing. Several states have bills pending.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Senator Oke, prime sponsor; Bob Socles, Washington State Legislative Coalition and The Chosen Few; Mel Baker, Capital Area Stroke Club; Bo Bergeron, Director, Department of Veterans Affairs; Michael Kaiser, Disabled American Veterans; Glen Galbraith, Coalition of Americans with Disabilities.