

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5612

As Passed Senate, March 13, 1997

Title: An act relating to the registration of architects.

Brief Description: Providing qualifications for granting certificates of registration to architects.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Senators Long, Wojahn, Hale and Horn).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 2/10/97, 2/28/97 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 3/13/97, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5612 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Schow, Chair; Horn, Vice Chair; Anderson, Franklin, Fraser, Heavey and Newhouse.

Staff: Aurora Almeda (786-7488)

Background: To obtain an architect's license, an applicant must pass an examination and have (1) a degree in architecture and three years' work experience, with at least two of those years under the supervision of an architect; or (2) at least eight years' work experience approved by the board, with at least four of those under the direct supervision of an architect.

Summary of Bill: In addition to having either a degree in architecture and three years' work experience or eight years' work experience, an applicant must have completed the requirements of a structured intern training program approved by the board. Eight years' work experience may include designing buildings as a principal activity.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect July 29, 2001.

Testimony For: Requiring that an applicant for an architect's license satisfy a structured internship program will ensure that he or she is better trained, and prepared to be licensed. Applicants who voluntarily participate in a structured internship program have a higher passage rate on the state examination in comparison to those who go through the general experience requirement, currently in place. The current requirement of training and experience for architects is too general and difficult to assess since it is on an individualized

basis. Requiring a structured internship training program would ensure that all applicants will have experience in the 16 areas of architectural expertise. The structured internship program adheres to the national internship standards for architects, which 38 states currently implement. Future applicants should have no problem adhering to the new requirement since the effective date is July 1, 2001.

Testimony Against: Requiring all applicants to go through a structured internship program is unfair to those who prefer the general experience route. The current requirements adequately train and prepare applicants for licensing and examination. The general experience requirement accommodates building designers who have a different but substantially similar experience and training as architects. The structured internship requirement appears exclusive to architects and simply adds another barrier to entry for those who do not have formal educational or training in architecture. The national internship standards the board of registration advocates is part of a national trend to shrink the pool of eligible individuals who are licensed to practice architecture.

Testified: PRO: Senator Jeanine Long; Larry Erickson, Janet Knoblach, American Institute of Architects; Peter Rasmussen, Architects Registration Board; CON: Wayne Sorenson, Washington State Association of Building Designers.