

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2792

As Passed House:

February 9, 2000

Title: An act relating to confidentiality of personal financial information.

Brief Description: Protecting personal financial information.

Sponsors: By House Committee on (originally sponsored by Representatives Haigh, D. Schmidt, Romero, McDonald, Rockefeller and Hurst; by request of Governor Locke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 2/1/00, 2/4/00 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/9/00, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Exempts information supplied to an agency for the electronic transfer of funds from public inspection and copying.
- Exempts financial information obtained in connection with an application for a liquor, gambling, or lottery license.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives McMorris, Republican Co-Chair; Romero, Democratic Co-Chair; Campbell, Republican Vice Chair; Miloscia, Democratic Vice Chair; Dunshee; Haigh; Lambert and D. Schmidt.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Initiative 276, approved by the voters in 1972, requires that all state agencies make all public records available for public inspection and copying unless they fall within certain statutory exceptions. The provisions requiring public records disclosure must be interpreted liberally and the exceptions narrowly in order to effectuate a general policy favoring disclosure.

Examples of statutory exceptions to the public records disclosure law include: a) personal information in agency files, the disclosure of which would violate an individual's right to privacy; b) financial and commercial information supplied by individuals applying for various programs; and c) residential addresses and telephone numbers of state agency employees.

Summary of Bill:

Credit card numbers, debit card numbers, electronic check numbers, card expiration dates, or bank or other financial account numbers supplied to an agency for the purpose of electronic transfer of funds are exempt from public inspection and copying, except when the disclosure is required by law.

Financial information related to an application for a liquor, gambling, or lottery retail license is also exempt from public inspection and copying.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill protects sensitive financial information from public disclosure, and simultaneously encourages electronic commerce. Financial information can be used for purposes of identity theft. Agencies should not be a repository of personal financial information for the public. This bill does not prevent agencies from having the information; it only protects the information from being disclosed to the public.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Haigh, prime sponsor; Everett Billingslea, Office of the Governor; Jan Gee, Washington Food Industry; and Vito Chiechi, Recreational Gaming Association.