

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5509

C 8 L 99

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating the Holocaust victims insurance relief act.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions (originally sponsored by Senators Kline, Jacobsen, Heavey, Horn, Finkbeiner, Patterson, Franklin, Fairley, Prentice, Hochstatter, Bauer, Gardner, Costa, Eide, McDonald, B. Sheldon, Goings, McAuliffe, Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen and Oke).

Senate Committee on Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions
House Committee on Financial Institutions & Insurance

Background: The proceeds of many insurance policies issued prior to and during World War II to Holocaust victims have not been paid to victims or their survivors. The burden has generally been on the victims and/or their families to provide paperwork to prove their claims. However, locating old insurance policies may be difficult and sometimes impossible with the passage of time and the fact that many Holocaust victims were forced from their homes and divested of their personal property, including their records. In many instances, insurance company records are the only proof of the insurance policies.

An international commission was established to investigate and facilitate the payment of insurance proceeds to Holocaust victims and their survivors. Other states have established or are establishing Holocaust survivor assistance offices and registries of insurance policies to help Holocaust victims and their survivors.

Summary: The Insurance Commissioner may establish a Holocaust Survivor Assistance Office to assist Washington State's Holocaust victims, their families and heirs to recover insurance proceeds and other assets improperly denied or processed. The Insurance Commissioner may establish a Holocaust Insurance Company Registry to contain information required of Washington insurers about insurance policies that were sold to persons in Europe and were in effect between 1933 and 1945. The commissioner may suspend the certificate of authority of an insurer who fails to provide the required information. A civil penalty of up to \$10,000 is established for knowingly filing false information.

The statute of limitations is extended to December 31, 2010 for Holocaust insurance claims.

The act expires on December 31, 2010.

Votes on Final Passage:

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| Senate | 48 0 |
| House | 91 0 |

Effective: July 25, 1999

