

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5780

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As of February 17, 1999

**Title:** An act relating to discrimination based on source of household income.

**Brief Description:** Prohibiting discrimination based on source of household income.

**Sponsors:** Senator Prentice.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions: 2/18/99.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, TRADE, HOUSING & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

**Staff:** Dave Cheal (786-7576)

**Background:** Housing discrimination based on race, gender, family status, presence of disability, national origin or creed is prohibited by state and federal law. Victims are provided with administrative and judicial remedies. Another form of discrimination is the refusal to rent to prospective tenants based on that person's status as a recipient of some form of public subsidy, such as a housing subsidy or general public assistance. Several states have prohibited this practice. In Washington, the cities of Seattle and Bellevue, and King County have local ordinances prohibiting this type of discrimination.

Housing assistance to renters from the federal government is shifting from project-based certificates to tenant-based rent vouchers.

**Summary of Bill:** Discrimination based on source of household income is declared to be against public policy and added to the types of discrimination the Human Rights Commission has the power to prevent and eliminate. The right to engage in credit transactions without discrimination is further defined as including discrimination because of source of income if that source can be verified as to amount, regularity, and length of time received.

"Source of household income" is defined as receipt of Social Security, public assistance, other federal, state, or local assistance, child support, spousal maintenance, or federal, state or local housing assistance.

Refusal to participate in a real estate transaction with a person because of the source of household income is declared an unfair practice. This prohibited practice is further defined as discriminating against the person in the terms, conditions or privileges of a real estate transaction, refusal or failure to receive or transmit a bona fide offer, representing to a person that the property is not available for inspection, sale, rental or lease, when in fact the property is available, and other similar types of conduct.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 17, 1999.

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