

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1433

As Passed House:

February 11, 2002

Title: An act relating to the disclosure of fire protection and building safety information.

Brief Description: Requiring disclosure of fire protection and building safety information.

Sponsors: By Representatives Cooper, Simpson, Linville, Wood, Ruderman, McDermott and Murray.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government & Housing: 1/23/02, 1/30/02 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/11/02, 84-13.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires landlord to provide tenants with a written statement disclosing information on fire protection and safety for residential buildings.
- Exempts single-family residences from the reporting requirements.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Edwards, Vice Chair; Mulliken, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, DeBolt, Dunn, Hatfield, Kirby and Sullivan.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Crouse and Mielke.

Staff: Kenny Pittman (786-7392).

Background:

Under the state fire protection law, all dwelling units occupied by persons other than the owner, or built/manufactured after 1980, must be equipped with smoke detection devices. Installation of the smoke detection devices is the owner's responsibility, and the owner is

also required to ensure that a device is operational after the dwelling becomes vacant. The tenant is responsible for maintaining the smoke detection device, including the replacement of batteries. Noncompliance by a landlord or tenant is punishable by a fine up to \$200.

The state's Residential Landlord-Tenant Act regulates the relationship between a residential property owner (landlord) and the renter of the residential property (tenant). Included in the landlord's duties is that tenants are provided with a written notice: (1) that the dwelling unit has smoke detection; (2) that the tenant is responsible for maintaining the smoke detection device in working condition; and (3) that there are penalties for failure to maintain the smoke detection devices in the dwelling unit.

Summary of Bill:

The state's Residential Landlord-Tenant Act is revised to require the landlord of a multi-family residential dwelling to provide a written statement to tenants that disclosing fire safety and protect information. The disclosure statement must include information on the fire protection features of the individual dwelling unit and the premises, such as fire sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, smoke detection devices (including whether they are hard wired or battery operated), other monitoring and detection systems, fire response plans, and evacuation practices, to the extent they exist, and if there is a smoking policy.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: This is really a safety awareness issue. A person moving into an apartment complex should be informed about fire protection and safety information. Having this information available will help prepare the tenants for an emergency.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Cooper, prime sponsor; N. Sue Alden, State Building Code Council; Paul O'Conner, Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board of Puget Sound; and Bob Mitchell, Washington Association of Commercial Realtors.