

State Government

HB 1187

Brief Description: *Exempting certain information on criminal acts from public disclosure.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Haigh, Miloscia, Darneille, McMorris, Lambert, Reardon, Dunshee, O'Brien, Delvin, Talcott, Campbell, G. Chandler, Quall, Anderson, Alexander, Schoesler, Esser and D. Schmidt ; by request of Military Department.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Exempts vulnerability assessments and response plans pertaining to potential acts of terrorism from public inspection and copying.*

Hearing Date: *2/7/01*

Staff: *Catherine Blinn (786-7114).*

Background:

The Public Disclosure Act (PDA) requires agencies to make available for public inspection and copying all public records, unless the record falls within a specific exemption. The PDA is liberally construed, and its exemptions narrowly construed, to promote a public policy of keeping the public informed and allowing the public to maintain control of state agencies. The current exemptions are specific, and generally focus on personal privacy, personal safety, or vital governmental interests. The list of exemptions includes:

- *Intelligence and information compiled by investigative, law enforcement, and penal agencies where confidentiality is essential to effective law enforcement or to the protection of a person's right to privacy;*
- *Information revealing the identities of witnesses or victims of crime, or identities of persons who file complaints with investigative, law enforcement or penal agencies, where disclosure would endanger any person's life, physical safety, or property;*
- *Records, maps, or other information identifying the location of archaeological sites in order to avoid the looting or depredation of such sites.*

Summary of Bill:

Records containing specific and unique vulnerability assessments or response plans intended to prevent or mitigate criminal acts of terrorism, the release of which would have a substantial likelihood of threatening public safety, are exempt from public inspection and copying.

Rulemaking Authority: No express authority.

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

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.