

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1277

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Judiciary, March 27, 2001

**Title:** An act relating to residential landlord-tenant relationships.

**Brief Description:** Regarding residential landlord-tenant relationships.

**Sponsors:** By Representatives Bush, Veloria, Van Luven, Kenney, Kirby, Mulliken and Dunshee.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Judiciary: 3/20/01, 3/27/01 [DP, DNP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kline, Chair; Constantine, Vice Chair; Costa, Kastama, Long and Thibaudeau.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Johnson.

**Staff:** Lidia Mori (786-7755)

**Background:** The state's Residential Landlord-Tenant Act governs the relationship between the renter of residential property and the property owner or property owner's agent. The act outlines the specific duties of the landlord and tenant.

Under the act, a landlord is required to designate to the tenant the name and address of the person who is the landlord by a statement on the rental agreement or by a notice conspicuously posted on the premises. The tenant must be notified immediately of any changes by certified mail or by an updated posting. If the person listed in the statement or posted notice does not reside in the state, the statement or posted notice must list the name and address of a person that resides within the county where the property is located and is authorized to act as agent for purposes of notices and process. If no person is listed, then the person who collects rental payments is considered the property owner's agent.

**Summary of Bill:** The state's Residential Landlord-Tenant Act is amended to allow the service of legal documents by certified mail to the landlord at the address posted on the property owner's tax statement or address provided to the tenant for payment of rent. This option must be approved by a superior or district court and used when the tenant is unable to determine the physical address of the landlord from the required statement or posting.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Most landlords and property owners are fair in their dealings with tenants but some hide behind a post office box. These landlords make themselves unavailable to tenants. In Pierce County this seems to be a problem. This bill protects both landlords and tenants.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Bush, prime sponsor; Patty Van Den Broek, Apartment Assn. of Seattle/King County; Bob Mitchell, Realtors Assn.