

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2767

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, February 27, 2002

Title: An act relating to public assistance electronic benefit cards.

Brief Description: Prohibiting use of public assistance electronic benefit cards for specified purposes.

Sponsors: House Committee on Children & Family Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Orcutt, Tokuda, Darneille, Chase, Mielke and Boldt).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 2/21/02, 2/27/02 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Costa, Vice Chair; Carlson, Franklin, Hewitt, Kastama, Long and Stevens.

Staff: Tony Rugel (786-7754)

Background: Public assistance recipients receive and use their cash benefits and food stamp benefits through an EBT card. The card resembles a debit or credit card, and is used to purchase goods and services, and to obtain cash at ATMs.

Under current law and administrative rule, public assistance recipients can be assigned a protective payee if the person receiving public assistance has demonstrated an inability to care for money.

Summary of Amended Bill: Recipients of electronic benefit transfer cards are prohibited from using their cards or cash obtained from their cards for gambling, horse racing, or purchasing lottery tickets. The recipients are given written notice that if they use their cards for any of the prohibited purposes they could be subjected to legal proceedings or loss of all cash public assistance. Operators of casinos, horse racing tracks, and sellers of lottery tickets are prohibited from allowing the use of electronic benefit transfer cards for any of the prohibited activities. They are required to report to DSHS any known violations.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The amendment removes all penalties to licensees and requires notice be given to EBT card recipients of the possible penalties for using the EBT card for prohibited activities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: Grocery store owners voiced concern that provisions of the bill relating to lottery tickets would be difficult to enforce.

Testified: Holly Chisa, WA Food Industry (con).