

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5097

As Passed Senate, January 26, 2002

Title: An act relating to displaying flags.

Brief Description: Requiring public entities to display the national league of families' POW/MIA flag.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on State & Local Government (originally sponsored by Senators Kastama, Winsley, Constantine, Hargrove, Oke, Rasmussen and Patterson).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 1/25/01, 2/26/01 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 3/12/01, 44-0; 1/26/02, 45-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5097 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Gardner, Hale, Haugen, Horn, Kline, McCaslin, Roach and Swecker.

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: The physical characteristics of the official flag of the State of Washington are described in statute. Both the state and national flags are required to be displayed in schools, court rooms and state buildings.

Summary of Bill: Every state agency, every state institution of higher education and every county, city, and town must display the national league of families POW/MIA flag along with the state and national flags upon or near its principal buildings on specific days. These days are Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, National POW/MIA Recognition Day, and Veterans' Day. Information about purchasing and displaying the flag is provided by the Governor's Veterans' Affairs Advisory Committee.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This flag tells our youth that fighting for freedom comes at a cost of missing friends, neighbors and family members. It is a reminder of the price we pay for our rights and privileges of our great nation.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Chuck Lawrence, Veterans Legislative Coalition (pro); Jeff McIntrye (pro); Tom Nelson, ex-POW (pro).

House Amendment(s): The House amendments change the display of the POW/MIA flag from mandatory to permissive and add "Former POW Recognition Day on April 9" to the days of display.