

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1133

C 274 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Reorganizing public disclosure law.

Sponsors: By House Committee on State Government Operations & Accountability (originally sponsored by Representatives Nixon, Haigh and Shabro).

House Committee on State Government Operations & Accountability
Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections

Background:

In 1972, voters approved Initiative 276. The initiative called for disclosure of campaign finances, lobbyists activities, financial affairs of elective officers and candidates, and access to public records.

At the time the initiative was passed, there were 10 exemptions from public records disclosure. In a 1978 decision, the Washington Supreme Court observed that the scheme set in statute by the disclosure statutes establishes a positive duty for a public agency to disclose public records unless they fall within the specific exemptions.

The public records disclosure statutes are codified between the statutes on campaign finance reporting and campaign finance contribution limits, making responsibility for enforcement of the public records disclosure status unclear.

Summary:

The public records disclosure statutes are recodified, amended, and reorganized as a new chapter to be cited as the Public Records Act. Exemptions from disclosure are reorganized into separate sections and, where possible, grouped by discrete subjects as follows:

- personal information;
- employment and licensing;
- investigative, law enforcement, and crime victim information;
- licensing and employment information;
- real estate;
- financial, commercial, and proprietary information;
- education information;
- public utilities and transportation information;
- health care information;
- agricultural and livestock information;
- insurance and financial institutions information;
- fish and wildlife information; and
- security information.

Statute cross- references are changed to reference the new chapter. No exemptions are modified, deleted, or added.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	96	0
Senate	46	0

Effective: July 1, 2006