

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1171

C 55 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Limiting the court's discretion concerning denial of dissolution decrees.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Juvenile Justice & Family Law (originally sponsored by Representatives Dickerson, Moeller, Cody, Roberts, Schual-Berke, Appleton, Morrell, Darneille, Chase, Kenney and Ormsby).

House Committee on Juvenile Justice & Family Law
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Background:

In Washington, the word "divorce" has been replaced by the term "dissolution." Washington is a no-fault state, which means that either spouse may ask the court to dissolve the marriage by stating that the marriage is irretrievably broken. The other party can delay, but not stop, the dissolution by alleging that the marriage is not irretrievably broken.

To start a dissolution proceeding, one spouse must file with the court a summons and petition for dissolution of marriage. If the other party joins in the petition or does not deny that the marriage is irretrievably broken, the court may enter a decree of dissolution 90 days after the petition for dissolution of marriage has been filed with the court. The decree of dissolution legally terminates the marriage and makes provisions for the parenting of minor children, family support, and the division of property and liabilities.

Summary:

A court is prohibited from using a party's pregnancy as the sole basis for denying or delaying entry of a decree of dissolution of marriage. This prohibition does not affect further proceedings under the Uniform Parentage Act.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	89	0
Senate	44	0

Effective: July 24, 2005