

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5661

As Passed Senate, March 3, 2009

Title: An act relating to exempting the annual parental declaration of intent to home school from the public disclosure act.

Brief Description: Exempting the annual parental declaration of intent to home school from the public disclosure act.

Sponsors: Senators Pridemore, Roach, King, Zarelli, Swecker, Hargrove, Fairley, Stevens, Kastama, Oemig, Shin, McAuliffe and Benton.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/12/09, 2/19/09 [DP].
Passed Senate: 3/03/09, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Kauffman, Vice Chair, Early Learning; Oemig, Vice Chair, K-12; King, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Hobbs, Holmquist, Jarrett, McDermott and Tom.

Staff: Juliana Roe (786-7438)

Background: Under current law, each parent whose child is receiving home-based instruction has the duty to, among other requirements, annually file a signed declaration of intent that the parent is planning to provide home-based instruction to his or her child. The declaration must be written in a format prescribed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and include the name and age of the child and whether a certificated person will be supervising the instruction. In the 2008-09 school year 10,787 families registered to provide home-based instruction to 16,577 children. This declaration is subject to the Public Records Act that requires all state and local government agencies to make all public records available for public inspection and copying unless they fall within certain statutory exemptions.

Summary of Bill: The annual declaration of intent to provide home-based instruction filed by a parent will not be subject to public disclosure.

Appropriation: None.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: OSPI and our school districts have an interest and obligation to keep track of what the students of our state are doing. However, the guy down the street has no right to this information. Parents of homeschooled students are required to submit declarations of intent to their school districts. This information should be private, and privacy should be respected. There is no reason that private citizens, organizations, or businesses should be privy to this information. Currently, this information is being disseminated to people without the permission of the families. This bill will protect the privacy of these families and keep them safe.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Pridemore, prime sponsor; Susan Bradrick, Christian Heritage Home Educators of Washington; DiAnna Brannan, Christian Homeschool Network; Shery Stacy, Karen Veldheer, citizens; Diane Altman, Washington Homeschool Organization.