

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1821

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR, APRIL 3, 1991

Brief Description: Making the fraudulent installation of fire protection sprinkler systems a felony.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Representatives R. Meyers, Ferguson, Schmidt, Zellinsky, Sheldon, Winsley, D. Sommers, Bowman, Paris, Miller, Riley, R. Johnson, Brough, Silver, Roland, Cooper, Horn, Chandler and Moyer).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Matson, Chairman; Anderson, Vice Chairman; Bluechel, McCaslin, McMullen, Moore, Murray, and Skratek.

Staff: Traci Anderson (786-7452)

Hearing Dates: April 2, 1991; April 3, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Under Washington law, various frauds and swindles are designated as crimes that range in seriousness from misdemeanors to felonies.

Persons convicted of class C felonies are subject to imprisonment for a maximum of five years, a fine of not more than \$10,000, or both. Persons convicted of a gross misdemeanor are subject to imprisonment of up to a year and a fine of not more than \$5,000, or both.

Washington requires that a person or business must be licensed as a fire sprinkler contractor to install fire sprinkler systems. Only the state director of fire protection may issue these licenses. To qualify, the contractor must employ a holder of a certificate of competency, also issued by the state director of fire protection, meet minimum insurance requirements, and apply to the state director.

SUMMARY:

A person is guilty of a class C felony if he or she willfully and maliciously constructs, installs, or maintains a fire sprinkler system and knows that the system is inoperable.

A person is also guilty of a class C felony if he or she willfully and knowingly impairs the operation of a sprinkler system.

Any person who constructs, installs, or maintains fire protection sprinkler systems without first obtaining the proper state license is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

As the state's population continues to grow and more high rises are being built, local governments are increasingly passing ordinances requiring that these buildings contain built-in fire protection systems. This bill will help to assure that these systems are properly installed and maintained.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: PRO: Gordon Walgren, Washington State Association of Fire Chiefs; Otto Jensen, Washington State Association of Fire Chiefs