

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SHB 1159

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C 210 L 94  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Disclosing improper governmental action.

By House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives H. Myers, Edmondson, Ludwig, Scott, Campbell, Kremen, Rayburn and Johanson.)

House Committee on Local Government  
Senate Committee on Government Operations

**Background:** The Legislature enacted a local government "whistleblower" program during the 1992 session to provide protections to local government employees who report improper governmental action to proper authorities. The protections provided to local government employees are similar to those provided to state government employees under the state whistleblower program.

Both the state and the local government whistleblower programs prohibit retaliatory action from being taken against the employee who disclosed information concerning the improper governmental action. "Retaliatory action" is defined under the state government whistleblower legislation to include specifically a supervisor or superior who encourages coworkers to behave in a hostile manner toward the whistleblower. There is no similar specific prohibition contained in the local government whistleblower statutes.

A state government office holder or employee is prohibited under the state whistleblower law from using his or her official influence or authority to attempt to influence or coerce another employee from reporting improper governmental action. There is no similar prohibition contained in the local government whistleblower statutes.

**Summary:** The definition of "retaliatory action" under the local government "whistleblower" statutes is amended to include hostile actions by another employee toward the whistleblower that were encouraged by a supervisor, senior manager, or local official.

Local government officials and employees are prohibited from directly or indirectly using their official authority or influence to threaten, intimidate, or coerce an employee to

interfere with the employee's right to report improper governmental action.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	94	0	
Senate	43	2	(Senate amended)
House			(House refused to concur)

Conference Committee

Senate	44	1
House	96	0

**Effective:** June 9, 1994