

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6205

As Passed Senate, February 12, 1998

Title: An act relating to waiver of interest on residential property taxes that are delinquent because of hardship due to the death of the taxpayer's spouse or parent.

Brief Description: Allowing waiver of interest and penalties on property taxes delinquent because of hardship.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations (originally sponsored by Senators McCaslin, Haugen, Patterson, Benton, Bauer, Winsley and Oke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 1/23/98, 1/29/98 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 2/12/98, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6205 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chair; Hale, Vice Chair; Haugen, Horn, Patterson and T. Sheldon.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: Property taxes are due April 30 each year. If one-half the tax is paid by April 30, the other half is due October 31. However, if the first half is not paid on time, the entire tax is delinquent and interest is charged at the rate of 12 percent per year. In addition, delinquent taxes are subject to penalties.

Summary of Bill: Interest and penalties on delinquent property taxes are waived by the county treasurer on the taxpayer's personal residence if the taxpayer claims that the delinquency is due to hardship caused by the death of the taxpayer's spouse or the taxpayer's parent's personal residence if the taxpayer claims that the delinquency is due to hardship caused by the death of the taxpayer's parent and the taxpayer notifies the county treasurer of the hardship within 60 days of the tax due date.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The Association of Treasurers is neutral on the substance but pro on the clarifications in the substitute bill.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Robin Hunt, Thurston County Treasurer/Washington Association of Treasurers.

House Amendment(s): A county must also waive interest and penalties owed on delinquent property taxes, when a taxpayer owes tax on a step-parent's personal residence following the death of a step-parent. Whenever anyone applies for a waiver under hardship circumstance involving the death of a spouse, parent, or step-parent, the county may require the taxpayer to furnish a death certificate and to sign an affidavit.