

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 1851

Brief Description: Requiring additional crime prevention training for employees of evening retail establishments.

Sponsors: Conway and Cooper

Hearing: February 15, 1999

Brief Summary of Bill

Retail businesses open between 7 pm and 7 am must provide crime prevention training to their employees.

BACKGROUND:

Violence in the workplace is a significant contributor to occupational injuries and fatalities. The Bureau of Labor's statistics for 1992-1996 show violence as the fourth leading cause of workplace deaths in Washington state, resulting in an average of 11 fatalities per year. In 1997 the number of fatalities rose to 15. According to the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), 25% of the average yearly claims related to assaults and violent acts result in four or more days of time loss from work. The average cost per claim during 1992-95 was \$3,535. However, during these same years the overall number of violence related claims decreased by approximately 12%.

In Washington state, violence by assailants who are not clients or co-workers account for most of the fatalities related to workplace violence. L&I reports that in 1992, 17% of workplace violence occurred at workplaces that are at risk of violence from robbery, especially where employees handle cash or work alone. Workplaces at risk of violence by strangers commonly include late night retail establishments and taxi cabs.

To address this type of workplace violence, late night retail establishments— are required by law to leave an unobstructed view of the cash register from the street, post a conspicuous sign in a window or door stating that employees do not have access to large amounts of cash, maintain a safe on the premises, and keep the parking area lit throughout the night hours the

establishment is open. Late night retail establishments— are businesses, other than restaurants, hotels, taverns or lodging facilities, that operate between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

In addition to enforcing the statute, the department administers a Late Night Retail Workers Crime Protection Standard. The standard requires all late night retail establishment employers to provide crime prevention training to employees. The training must teach employees robbery and violence prevention policies and procedures, and provide the skills and knowledge needed for employees to protect their safety.

SUMMARY OF BILL:

The safety requirements for late night retail establishments— are modified.

The definition for late night retail establishments is expanded to cover establishments making sales between 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Consequently, "late night retail establishment" is renamed evening retail establishment.—

Employers of evening retail establishments are required to provide crime prevention training to their employees. The training must be part of the employer's accident prevention program. It must at a minimum consist of issuance of a training manual regarding security policies, safety and security procedures, personal safety techniques, crime avoidance techniques, and presentation of a safety video or training seminar. The manual and video must be developed or certified by the Department of Labor and Industries.

RULES AUTHORITY: The bill does not contain provisions addressing the rule making powers of an agency.

FISCAL NOTE: Not requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment of a session in which bill is passed.