
Local Government Committee

HB 1145

Brief Description: Authorizing donation of unclaimed personal property to nonprofit charitable organizations.

Sponsors: Representatives Clibborn, Tom, Morrell, Springer, Curtis, Ormsby, Kagi, Eickmeyer, Kenney and Darneille.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows state and local law enforcement agencies to donate any unclaimed personal property to nonprofit charitable organizations provided such property is used for the benefit of needy persons.

Hearing Date: 1/24/05

Staff: Thamas Osborn (786-7129).

Background:

Washington law has an extensive statutory scheme regarding procedures for the treatment and disposition of lost and/or unclaimed personal property. These statutes include provisions regulating how police departments, county sheriffs, and the state patrol must dispose of such property. The regulations governing these law enforcement agencies are similar, each containing procedures for the disposition of unclaimed property that include:

- notice requirements to the owner, if the owner has been identified;
- sale of unclaimed property at auction;
- destruction of certain types of property (e.g., dangerous, illegal, or worthless items); and
- retention of the property by the law enforcement agency under certain circumstances.

State law allows an exception to these general rules for county sheriffs and local police departments regarding the disposition of unclaimed bicycles, tricycles, and toys. This exception allows these items to be donated to nonprofit charitable organizations. No exception exists with respect to such unclaimed items that are in the possession of the state patrol.

Summary of Bill:

The state patrol, county sheriffs, and local police agencies may donate any unclaimed personal property to nonprofit charitable organizations provided such property is used for the benefit of needy persons.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 19, 2005.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.