

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2537

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*As Reported By House Committee on:  
Judiciary*

**Title:** An act relating to dangerous weapons on elementary or secondary school premises.

**Brief Description:** Prohibiting dangerous weapons on elementary and secondary school premises.

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Pruitt, Brough, Peery, Betrozoff, D. Sommers, Jacobsen, Wineberry, Paris, Franklin, Ebersole, Van Luven, Bowman, Orr, May, Scott, Broback, J. Kohl, Wood, Wynne, Roland, Mitchell, O'Brien, Hine, Rasmussen, P. Johnson and Anderson.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Judiciary, February 7, 1992, DPS.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
JUDICIARY**

**Majority Report:** *The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.* Signed by 10 members: Representatives Appelwick, Chair; Ludwig, Vice Chair; Paris, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Belcher; Forner; Locke; R. Meyers; H. Myers; Riley; and Scott.

**Minority Report:** *Do not pass.* Signed by 7 members: Representatives Padden, Ranking Minority Member; Broback; Hargrove; Mielke; D. Sommers; Tate; and Vance.

**Staff:** Margaret Allen (786-7191).

**Background:** Several school districts in the state have reported incidents of parents, youths who are not students, and other persons entering school property with weapons.

Current state law prohibits only elementary or secondary students under the age of 21 from carrying firearms or other dangerous weapons onto public or private school premises.

Exemptions exist for students of private military academies, students in government-sponsored military activities, students attending a convention or authorized firearms safety course in which firearms are handled or displayed,

students who possess weapons to be used in martial arts classes on school premises, or students participating in an approved firearms or air gun competition.

Violation of the statute is a gross misdemeanor and grounds for expulsion.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The prohibition against carrying enumerated weapons onto school premises is extended to all persons.

Exemptions are extended to all persons as well, except for the exemption for students of private military academies, which is extended only to employees.

The requirement that military activities be sponsored by the federal or state government is deleted.

The exemption for attendance at a convention or approved firearms safety course is changed to involvement in a convention, showing, demonstration, lecture, or approved firearms safety course.

Exemptions for law enforcement and security activities are added. In addition, an exemption is added for any person legally in possession of a firearm or other dangerous weapon that is secured within an attended vehicle or concealed from view within a locked, unattended vehicle.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The original bill and substitute bill were identical, except for the addition of the new exemption in the substitute bill for persons legally in possession of firearms left in vehicles.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** (Original bill): This is an issue of student safety. The problem is not who brings the weapon to the school, but that the weapon is brought to the school at all. The prohibition should be extended to everyone.

**Testimony Against:** (Original bill): There is more risk to children being dropped off in the school parking lot than from weapons being on school property. Only law-abiding citizens would be affected by this bill, as gang members and unlicensed persons carrying weapons will ignore the law if enacted anyway. If a person is responsible enough to have a concealed weapon permit, that person is responsible enough

to carry a weapon into a school. This bill punishes many for the act of one irresponsible person.

**Witnesses:** Dwayne Slate, Washington School Directors Association (supports); John Hosford, Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms (opposes); and Al Woodbridge, Washington Rifle and Pistol Association (opposes).