

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6167

AS OF FEBRUARY 4, 1992

Brief Description: Clarifying the right to civil actions against employers.

SPONSORS: Senators Murray, Nelson, A. Smith, Rasmussen, Niemi, Madsen, Sutherland, Rinehart, Gaspard and Pelz

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Staff: Jack Brummel (786-7428)

Hearing Dates: February 5, 1992

BACKGROUND:

Washington enacted its law against discrimination in 1949. It has been amended several times since then. Under its provisions, the Human Rights Commission may hear and rule on cases alleging discrimination by companies that employ eight or more persons. The law declares it a civil right to be free from discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical handicap.

Although the law appears to allow a plaintiff to file suit on their own for discrimination without involving the Human Rights Commission, the courts have limited this private right of action to those instances where there are at least eight employees.

SUMMARY:

The section of Washington's law against discrimination which establishes the right to be free from discrimination is amended. Employment includes any person acting in the interest of an employer who employs one or more persons.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested