

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 5108

May 16, 1995

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Senate Bill No. 5108 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to hunting licenses;"

Senate Bill No. 5108 reverses current policy by eliminating hunter education requirements for the purchase of a hunting license for new hunters 18 years of age or older.

Hunter education courses save lives and prevent injury. They also promote good hunting practices and respect for private property. Other states agree: forty-eight states require mandatory hunter education, and twenty-nine states have regulations which require first time hunters of any age, or adults born after a certain date, to complete a hunter education course. From 1987-1993 the state of Washington averaged over 2 fatal and 19 nonfatal hunting accidents per year. We cannot afford to weaken a program that serves to reduce accidents and save lives.

The cost of the program to new hunters averages \$5. Certification lasts a lifetime. Although new hunters may be inconvenienced, this does not justify removing the current requirement.

I will ask the Fish and Wildlife Commission to work with the State Hunter Education Instructors Association and with other interested parties to ensure that an adequate number of courses are provided at times and places sufficient to allow accessibility to all prospective hunters.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Senate Bill No. 5108 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Lowry
Governor