

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 5127

May 18, 1999

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

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to section 1, Senate Bill No. 5127 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to investigations of abuse or neglect;"

Senate Bill No. 5127 requires specialized training for law enforcement officers and caseworkers who investigate allegations of child sexual abuse. It also prohibits a law enforcement officer from participating in an investigation of alleged abuse concerning a child for whom the officer is a parent, guardian or foster parent.

The training required by SB 5127 is not adequately funded by the operating budget for the 1999-2001 biennium that I signed on May 14, 1999. To fully implement the required training, the legislature must appropriate at least \$537,000 in supplemental funds next year.

The process of investigating child abuse allegations and prosecuting alleged perpetrators is complex and must adhere to many laws and procedures. Section 1 of SB 5127 is sufficiently vague that it could be misconstrued to alter existing law. Vetoing it does not weaken the substance of this bill.

For these reasons, I have vetoed section 1 of Senate Bill No. 5127.

With the exception of section 1, Senate Bill No. 5127 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor