

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2147

As Passed House:

March 17, 2003

Title: An act relating to preschool and elementary school students assisting in school kitchens.

Brief Description: Protecting preschool and elementary school students assisting in school kitchens.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives McDermott, Upthegrove, Cox, Quall and Rockefeller).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 3/3/03, 3/5/03 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/17/03, 96-2.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Requires the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to adopt and make available to school districts a model policy protecting preschool through sixth grade students who help in elementary school kitchens.
- Requires school districts to adopt or amend a policy protecting children who help in elementary school kitchens.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; McDermott, Vice Chair; Haigh, Hunter, Rockefeller and Santos.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Tom, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Cox and McMahan.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

Under current law, school districts may establish, equip, and operate lunchrooms in school buildings for students, volunteers, school employees, public agencies, political subdivisions, associations that serve the public, nutrition programs, and for school and employee functions. The lunchrooms are staffed with classified personnel. At times, students are allowed to help in school kitchens.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill:

By January 12, 2004, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) will adopt a model policy protecting preschool through sixth grade children who help in elementary school kitchens. During the process of creating the policy, the OSPI will consult the Washington State School Directors' Association, parents, principals, representatives of food service employee groups and other interested parties.

By August 1, 2004, each school district will adopt or amend a policy for protecting preschool through sixth grade students who assist in elementary school kitchens.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: Elementary school children are sometimes rewarded for good behavior with a chance to help in school kitchens. Parents aren't always asked whether they want their children to assist in the kitchens and children aren't given any training or formal guidance on their kitchen duties. School kitchen equipment is designed for adults; it may well prove hazardous for youngsters. In fact, the opportunities for injury are daunting. Children can slip on wet floors, sustain burns from dishwashers and hot food and become injured in other ways. Parents need to know what their children will be asked to do and what types of hazards they might face. Although some districts have policies that protect children in school kitchens, many districts have not addressed the issue. Every district should make sure that any child assisting in a school kitchen will receive the protection that the child deserves. The policies may help protect districts from liability if children are injured.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative McDermott, prime sponsor; Wendy Rader-Konofalski,

Washington Federation of Teachers; Patti Richardson, Washington Federation of Teachers, United Classified Workers Union; and Carol Taylor Cann, Washington State Parent Teachers Association.