

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2473

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to possession of weapons in courthouse buildings.

Brief Description: Restricting possession of weapons in courthouse buildings.

Sponsors: By Representatives Clibborn, Woods, Lantz, Jarrett, Darneille, Bailey, Hunt, Lovick, Shabro, Kenney, Chase, Tom and Schual-Berke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Judiciary: 1/22/04 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/10/04, 95-0.

Passed Senate: 3/2/04, 47-1.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits a law enforcement officer from possessing a firearm or other weapon in court when the officer is a party to a court proceeding involving harassment or domestic violence.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Lantz, Chair; Moeller, Vice Chair; Carrell, Ranking Minority Member; McMahan, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell, Kirby and Newhouse.

Staff: Bill Perry (786-7123).

Background:

Weapons, including firearms, are generally prohibited in courtrooms and other court facilities. However, exceptions are provided for military and security personnel while they are engaged in official duties and for law enforcement personnel.

Summary of Bill:

A law enforcement officer is prohibited from possessing a weapon in a court facility if the officer is present at the facility as a party to an action involving harassment or domestic violence.

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: Victims of abuse are already fearful of going to court. Seeing an abuser with a weapon in the courtroom only increases the fear and the chances of violent retaliation. With this bill, victims' advocates can alert court security personnel to check law enforcement officers who are parties to a legal proceeding that a victim is attending.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Linda Webb, King County Prosecutor's Office, Protection Order Advocacy.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.