
Commerce & Labor Committee

HB 2833

Brief Description: Modifying the definition of sellers of travel.

Sponsors: Representatives Conway, McMorris, Wood, Hudgins and McCoy.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires those for whom consulting or advising regarding travel and accommodation arrangements is a part of their job, but not a principal duty, to register with the Department of Licensing as a seller of travel.

Hearing Date: 2/3/04

Staff: Susan Kavanaugh (786-7106).

Background:

The definition of a "seller of travel" covers persons and companies that transact business with Washington consumers, and includes travel agencies, travel agents, and others whose "principal" business duties include consulting with and advising people regarding travel or accommodation arrangements.

Since 1996, sellers of travel have been required to register with the Department of Licensing (Department). Registered sellers of travel pay an annual \$234 licensing fee. Sellers of travel who hold customers' money for more than five days are also required to maintain a trust account, post a surety bond, or maintain membership in a national organization that provides professional liability and errors insurance. Sellers of travel must keep records and adhere to prescribed cancellation and refund policies.

The Department and the Attorney General's Office report that persons, firms, and corporations that consult and advise regarding travel and accommodation arrangements as something less than a principal part of their business include schools, colleges, religious groups, and travel clubs.

Summary of Bill:

The definition of "seller of travel" is amended to delete the requirement that consulting with and advising people regarding travel or accommodation arrangements be among the "principal" business duties. Any person, firm, or corporation who has such consulting and advising as any part of their work duties is required to register as a seller of travel.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 28, 2004.

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