

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 2045

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Technology & Communications, April 3, 2003

Title: An act relating to identification numbers issued by state agencies.

Brief Description: Establishing a work group to evaluate creating a common data definition for the state.

Sponsors: Representatives Haigh, Armstrong and Miloscia.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Technology & Communications: 3/24/03, 4/3/03 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Esser, Chair; Finkbeiner, Vice Chair; Eide, Poulsen, Reardon, Schmidt and Stevens.

Staff: Dario de la Rosa (786-7484)

Background: State agencies use a variety of methods to collect and maintain identifying information regarding persons and businesses that conduct business with the state. State and federal privacy laws prohibit state agencies from using social security numbers as identification numbers or account numbers. Privacy laws also prohibit agencies from releasing personal information about persons and businesses to anyone who is not authorized to access such information.

The 2002 Statewide Accountability Report issued by the State Auditor's Office recommended that the Legislature consider requiring any person receiving state benefits or having contact with the state be given an individual identifying number. Individuals would be required to present this number when conducting business with state agencies. The State Auditor's goal is to allow agencies to perform data matches for any of their clients with any other state agency to determine if continuing or additional assistance is proper or necessary.

Summary of Amended Bill: The Information Services Board (ISB) must convene a work group to evaluate the challenges of defining common data for state agencies that collect, maintain, and share identifying information regarding persons and businesses that conduct business with the state. The chair of the ISB must select representatives from state agencies to serve on the work group and seek information from agencies that maintain data warehouses that contain personal information regarding the persons who do business with the state. The work group will examine systems that each agency uses to collect, store, and exchange identifying information associated with each record, requirements and procedures provided in state and federal privacy laws to prevent unauthorized releases of information, and processes that state and federal agencies have in place to exchange information.

The work group must also examine the challenges of creating common data definitions, maintaining data integrity and accuracy when sharing or exchanging data, and processes necessary to ensure that information associated with each person or business is only accessible to authorized persons. The work group must issue a progress report of its findings and recommendations to the ISB by December 15, 2003, and to the Legislature by January 31, 2004.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The Information Services Board is now responsible for staffing the work group. The chair of the Information Services Board selects representatives from various state agencies to participate in the work group.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Many state agencies use different identification numbers to track individuals who have contact or do business with that agency. Additionally, some agencies use their clients' Social Security numbers to identify customers, even though this is in violation of state and federal privacy laws. To protect confidential information about individuals who do business with the state, it may be important to create common standards for identifying an individual.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Kathy Haigh, prime sponsor.