

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5597

As Passed Senate, February 11, 2004

Title: An act relating to protecting the health of minors by prohibiting tobacco product sampling.

Brief Description: Prohibiting tobacco product sampling.

Sponsors: Senators Oke, T. Sheldon, Swecker, Thibaudeau, Carlson, Shin, Winsley, Spanel, Kline, Regala, Haugen, Jacobsen, Poulsen, B. Sheldon, Stevens, Keiser, Kohl-Welles and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/11/03, 2/20/03 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/17/03, 42-7; 2/11/04, 41-7.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Winsley, Vice Chair; Brandland, Franklin, Keiser, Parlette and Thibaudeau.

Staff: Tanya Karwaki (786-7447)

Background: Cigarette manufacturers distribute free samples as a marketing technique. The Washington State Liquor Control Board regulates the business of sampling tobacco products. Upon payment of an annual fee, a person engaged in the business of sampling may distribute samples in authorized areas. Current law prohibits the distribution of free samples to minors.

Summary of Bill: Distributing tobacco product samples to members of the public is prohibited. Any violation of this prohibition is a misdemeanor. Various provisions of the laws regulating sampling are deleted or repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This bill ends tobacco sampling in the State of Washington. Eight other states have enacted a similar law. Eighty-two percent of smokers begin smoking before they are 18 years old. The samples that are given out all fall into the hands of young people. If young people stop using tobacco, then smoking will cease because all of the older people will die. The state is lax in its commitment to promote health if it allows tobacco sampling to continue. This bill does not prevent adults from obtaining and using tobacco products.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Paul Sanders, Washington State Prostate Cancer Coalition; Paul Zemann, Public Health, Seattle and King County; Mary Selecky, DOH; Dave Horn, AG's Office; Nick Federici, Lung Assn.; Mike O'Sullivan, American Cancer Society; Karen McDonell, citizen; Ryan Lundquist, citizen; Rick Bender, No Snuff.