

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5861

As Passed Senate, January 26, 2004

Title: An act relating to criminal impersonation of a veteran of the armed forces.

Brief Description: Making it a crime to impersonate a veteran of the armed forces.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Roach, Rasmussen, T. Sheldon, Finkbeiner, Kohl-Welles, Oke, Schmidt and Shin).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/18/03, 2/28/03 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 3/16/03, 48-0; 1/26/04, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5861 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Stevens, Vice Chair; Fairley, Horn and Kastama.

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: Impersonating a law enforcement officer is the crime of criminal impersonation in the second degree. This crime is a misdemeanor. A misdemeanor is a crime punishable by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than 90 days or a fine of not more than \$1,000 or both.

Summary of Bill: Criminal impersonation in the second degree includes the additional situation of falsely assuming the identity of active or retired military personnel with intent to defraud for personal gain or to facilitate any unlawful activity.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Veterans have earned various rights, such as hospitalization, that are used by those impersonating veterans. Likewise, indigent people pose as veterans to prey on the public's sympathy.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Chuck and Diana Lawrence, 4th Infantry Div, Vietnam Veterans of America.

House Amendment(s): The House amendments clarifies that the bill applies to falsely assuming the identity of a veteran or active-duty member of the armed services.