

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1510

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, March 18, 2009

**Title:** An act relating to the disclosure of confidential information on birth certificates.

**Brief Description:** Regarding disclosure of confidential information on birth certificates.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Ross, Klippert and Johnson).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/03/09, 97-0.

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 3/18/09 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Becker, Fairley and Parlette.

**Staff:** Rhoda Donkin (786-7465)

**Background:** Vital records provide information about birth, death, fetal death, marriage, dissolution, annulment, and legal separation, as maintained under the supervision of the state registrar of vital statistics at the Department of Health (DOH). State law requires that certificates containing vital statistics include, at a minimum, the items recommended by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). The DOH uses a standard live birth form, developed by the NCHS and the federal government .

The nonconfidential portion of a birth certificate contains information including the mother's social security number, and name of the birth facility. Certified copies of birth certificates are available through the state registrar or local deputy registrar.

Under state law, certain sections of a certificate of live birth are not subject to public inspection, nor may they be included on certified copies of the record except upon court order. The Washington State Board of Health (Board) is authorized to require the inclusion of additional information that may be deemed necessary for statistical study. In addition to the federally established standard, the Board requires 11 additional pieces of information, each contained within the certificate's confidential section.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

A person may request and receive vital records information without personal identifiers (i.e., names and addresses) for research purposes or statistical study if certain conditions are met that safeguard the confidentiality of the records. If someone requests birth certificate confidential information with personal identifiers for research purposes, that person must obtain approval through a standing human research review board.

**Summary of Bill:** An individual may review, with or without a court order, the confidential section of his or her own birth certificate. The person's request is subject to the confirmation of the person's identity in a manner approved by the Washington State Board of Health.

Confidential information provided to the individual identified in the birth certificate is limited to what is written about the child, and may not include information on the mother or father.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** None.

**Persons Testifying:** No one.