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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5388**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Zeiger, Sheldon, Kuderer, Padden, Wilson, Conway, Fortunato, Hobbs, Becker, Warnick, and Honeyford)

AN ACT Relating to the removal of unauthorized persons from certain premises; adding new sections to chapter 9A.52 RCW; and adding a new section to chapter 4.24 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 9A.52 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3) of this section and upon the receipt of a declaration signed under penalty of perjury and containing all of the required information and in the form prescribed in section 2 of this act, a peace officer shall have the authority to:

(a) Remove the person or persons from the premises, with or without arresting the person or persons; and

(b) Order the person or persons to remain off the premises or be subject to arrest for criminal trespass.

(2) Only a peace officer having probable cause to believe that a person is guilty of criminal trespass under RCW 9A.52.070 for knowingly entering or remaining unlawfully in a building considered residential real property, as defined in RCW 61.24.005, has the authority and discretion to make an arrest or exclude anyone under penalty of criminal trespass.

(3) While a peace officer can take into account a declaration from the property owner signed under penalty of perjury containing all of the required information and in the form prescribed in section 2 of this act, the peace officer must provide the occupant or occupants with a reasonable opportunity to secure and present any credible evidence provided by the person or persons on the premises, which the peace officer must consider, showing that the person or persons are tenants, legal occupants, or the guests or invitees of tenants or legal occupants.

(4) Neither the peace officer nor his or her law enforcement agency shall be held liable for actions or omissions made in good faith under this section.

(5) This section may not be construed to allow a peace officer to remove or exclude an occupant who is entitled to occupy a dwelling unit under a rental agreement or the occupant's guests or invitees.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 9A.52 RCW to read as follows:

The owner of premises, or his or her authorized agent, may initiate the investigation and request the removal of an unauthorized person or persons from the premises by providing to law enforcement a declaration containing all of the following required information and in substantially the following form:

REQUEST TO REMOVE TRESPASSER(S) FORM

The undersigned owner, or authorized agent of the owner, of the premises located at .......... hereby represents and declares under the penalty of perjury that (initial each box):

(1) [ ] The declarant is the owner of the premises or the authorized agent of the owner of the premises;

(2) [ ] An unauthorized person or persons have entered and are remaining unlawfully on the premises;

(3) [ ] The person or persons were not authorized to enter or remain;

(4) [ ] The person or persons were not and have never been a tenant or tenants on that property;

(5) [ ] The declarant has demanded that the unauthorized person or persons vacate the premises but they have not done so;

(6) [ ] The premises were not abandoned at the time the unauthorized person or persons entered;

(7) [ ] The premises were not open to members of the public at the time the unauthorized person or persons entered;

(8) [ ] The declarant understands that a person or persons removed from the premises pursuant to section 1 of this act may bring a cause of action under section 3 of this act against the declarant for any false statements made in this declaration, and that as a result of such action the declarant may be held liable for actual damages, costs, and reasonable attorneys' fees;

(9) [ ] The declarant understands and acknowledges the prohibitions in RCW 59.18.230 and 59.18.290 against taking or detaining an occupant's personal property or removing or excluding an occupant from a dwelling unit or rental premises without an authorizing court order;

(10) [ ] The declarant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless law enforcement for its actions or omissions made in good faith pursuant to this declaration; and

(11) [ ] Additional Optional Explanatory Comments:

...................................................................

.......

An owner of premises who falsely swears on a declaration provided under this section may be guilty of false swearing under RCW 9A.72.040 or of making a false or misleading statement to a public servant under RCW 9A.76.175, both of which are gross misdemeanors.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 4.24 RCW to read as follows:

All persons removed from premises pursuant to section 1 of this act on the basis of false statements made by a declarant pursuant to section 2 of this act shall have a cause of action to recover from the declarant for the full amount of damages caused thereby, together with costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

**--- END ---**