

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1335

---

---

**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Labor & Workplace Standards

**Title:** An act relating to protecting military spouses from employment discrimination.

**Brief Description:** Protecting military spouses from employment discrimination.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Richards, Reeves, Leavitt, McEntire, Shavers, Abell, Springer, Ormsby, Macri, Reed, Hill, Doglio, Caldier, Paul and Nance.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Labor & Workplace Standards: 1/28/25, 2/7/25 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Protects military spouses from discrimination in employment and labor practices.

---

### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKPLACE STANDARDS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Berry, Chair; Fosse, Vice Chair; Scott, Vice Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Ybarra, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bronoske, McEntire, Obras and Ortiz-Self.

**Staff:** Jim Morishima (786-7191).

**Background:**

The Washington Law Against Discrimination (WLAD) protects members of specified protected classes from discrimination, including discrimination based on race, creed, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, or veteran status. The Human Rights Commission (Commission) administers and enforces the WLAD. If the Commission finds

---

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

that there is reasonable cause to believe unlawful discrimination has occurred, it must first attempt to resolve the issue through conference and conciliation. If this process fails, the Commission must refer the matter to an administrative law judge.

The WLAD establishes certain unfair practices relating to a person's membership in a protected class, including the following practices relating to labor and employment:

- refusing to hire a person, discharging or barring a person from employment, discriminating against a person in compensation or other terms and conditions of employment, or expressing any limitation, specification, or discrimination in a statement, advertisement, publication, or job application;
- denying membership to a person, expelling a person, or discriminating against a person in a labor union; and
- refusing to properly classify a person or refer a person for employment by an employment agency.

---

### **Summary of Bill:**

Military spouses are added to the class of persons protected by the Washington Law Against Discrimination (WLAD). The right of a military spouse to obtain and hold employment without discrimination is added to the list of rights protected by the WLAD. Military spouses are added to the list of individuals against whom employers, labor unions, and employment agencies may not discriminate.

A military spouse is defined as a person currently or previously married to a service member during the service member's time of active duty military service.

---

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

### **Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Military spouses are the pillars of military families, but are facing discrimination based on false stereotypes. Employers assume military spouses are unqualified or unreliable. This is worse for spouses who have vocational licenses. These spouses have highly valuable skills, but are undervalued. This results in military spouses being unemployed or underemployed. It also results in lost opportunities for advancement. The Washington Law Against Discrimination (WLAD) already protects veterans and

service members and spouses should also be protected. Similar measures to this one have passed in other states. This bill provides basic protections for military spouses, who are helping to protect our freedom.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) Military spouses are appreciated for their sacrifices and contributions. It should be clarified whether adding military spouses to the WLAD also adds them to the Equal Pay and Opportunities Act.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Adison Richards, prime sponsor; Matthew Shillingburg, Veterans Legislative Coalition VFW Representative; Tammie Perreault, Department of Defense; Valerie Vasconez; and Sheena Hathorn.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) Rose Gundersen, WA Retail Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.