

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2419

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
State Government & Tribal Relations

**Title:** An act relating to participation in the address confidentiality program by administrative law judges and staff employed by the office of administrative hearings.

**Brief Description:** Concerning participation in the address confidentiality program by administrative law judges and staff employed by the office of administrative hearings.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Taylor, Hill, Parshley, Berry, Scott, Reed and Donaghy; by request of Office of Administrative Hearings.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

State Government & Tribal Relations: 1/23/26, 1/28/26 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Expands the list of individuals who qualify to apply for the Address Confidentiality Program on the basis of being a target of threat or harassment prohibited under the criminal code to administrative law judges at the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), and appointed staff of the OAH.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL RELATIONS

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Mena, Chair; Stearns, Vice Chair; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Doglio and Farivar.

**Minority Report:** Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Waters, Ranking Minority Member; Chase.

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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 part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Staff:** Desiree Omli (786-7105).

**Background:**

Address Confidentiality Program.

The Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) allows a person meeting certain criteria to apply to the Secretary of State for a separate address to serve as the person's public address in order to keep his or her actual address confidential. The ACP is available for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, or stalking, who fear for their safety. A person may apply on their own behalf or on behalf of a minor or incapacitated person who meets the criteria. A criminal justice participant, election official, health care services provider who provides specified protected health services, and their family members are eligible for the ACP if they are a target for threats or harassment prohibited under both the harassment and cyber harassment criminal statutes.

Harassment.

A person commits the crime of harassment by threatening another person with the intent to harm that person. For the communication to constitute harassment it must threaten bodily injury, property damage, physical confinement or restraint, or a malicious act, and the threatened person must reasonably fear that the threat will be carried out. Actions that constitute harassment include any form of communication, including electronic.

Cyber Harassment.

A person commits the crime of cyber harassment if the person makes an electronic communication to another person or a third party with the intent to harass or intimidate another person, except where such acts would constitute telephone harassment. To qualify as cyber harassment, the following criteria must be met:

1. the communication must:
  - a. use lewd, lascivious, indecent, or obscene words, images, or language, or suggest the commission of any lewd or lascivious acts;
  - b. be made anonymously or repeatedly; or
  - c. threaten to inflict bodily injury upon, or injury to the property of, the person being harassed or any member of his or her family or household; and
2. the communication:
  - a. would cause a reasonable person with the knowledge of the sender's history to suffer emotional distress or to fear for the safety of the person threatened; or
  - b. reasonably caused the threatened person to suffer emotional distress or fear for the threatened person's safety.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The list of eligible individuals who qualify for the ACP on the basis of being a target for threats or harassment prohibited under both the harassment and cyber harassment criminal

statutes is expanded to include appointed administrative law judges at the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), and appointed staff of the OAH.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The sworn statement that must accompany an application for the ACP program is modified to require the applicant to, among other things, swear under penalty of perjury that the applicant is the Chief Administrative Law Judge or an administrative law judge or staff at the OAH.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on January 29, 2026.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Currently judges who work for federal, state, and local courts are eligible for the ACP program but administrative law judges (ALJs) are not. The OAH handles about 50,000 to 60,000 cases per year from over 40 agencies. These cases involve highly emotional issues that have direct impacts on people's lives, and the decisions issued by ALJs on these cases have exposed ALJs and staff at the OAH to real threats similar to those received by federal, state, and local court judges. In response to recent threats, the OAH hired security for its buildings and requested that local law enforcement provide extra patrols outside the residence of one of the ALJs. Since the pandemic, many ALJs work from home, so this level of protection is a relevant and necessary tool that provides additional security measures if someone needs it.

Superior court county clerks (clerks) should be included in this policy as well. Clerks provide assistance to many individuals who are distraught, angry, or unstable and it is often the clerk's name on court documents pertaining to emotionally charged cases such as notices of eviction. Clerks are seeing an increase in threats made against them, particularly in eviction and family law cases. Adding the clerks to the legislation would provide them with the same protections as other justice system participants and their staff.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Mike Wark, Office of Administrative Hearings; Micah Larripa, Office of Administrative Hearings; Timothy Grisham, WA Assn of County Officials; and Catherine Cornwall, King County Superior Court Clerk.

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