

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2423

As Reported By House Committee On:
Government Operations

Title: An act relating to public access to electronic public records.

Brief Description: Making electronic public records available to the public.

Sponsors: Representatives Horn, Jacobsen, Patterson and B. Thomas.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Operations: 1/23/96 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Reams, Chairman; Cairnes, Vice Chairman; Goldsmith, Vice Chairman; Rust, Ranking Minority Member; Scott, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Conway; R. Fisher; Hargrove; Honeyford; Hymes; Mulliken; D. Schmidt and Wolfe.

Staff: Scott White (786-7153).

Background: Measures providing for the coordinated planning and management of state information services are established in statute.

Summary of Bill: Provisions are established relating to public access to electronic public records.

The Legislature declares its intent to encourage state agencies and local governments to develop, store, and manage their public records in electronic format and, where appropriate, to make these electronic public records widely available to the public. They are further encouraged to utilize two-way electronic interaction and delivery technologies to send and receive forms, applications, and other information.

State agencies and local governments should plan for wide public access to electronic public records when redesigning and rebuilding information systems. Further, they should coordinate technology planning with other state agencies and local governments where appropriate.

Funding for the development of mechanisms which would allow the public access to electronic public records should come from a variety of sources, including federal, state, local, and private funds. Public/private partnerships and cooperative ventures among governments should also be used.

A pilot project to design and test an electronic information locator system allowing members of the public to locate and access electronic public records is to be conducted by the State Library, with the assistance of the state archivist and the Department of Information Services. Appropriations from both the general fund-state and general fund-federal are made to the State Library for a contract with the Seattle Public Library and for implementing the pilot project. If funding for this project is not provided by June 30, 1996, then the pilot project is void.

Appropriation: A general fund-state appropriation of \$211,000 for fiscal year 1997 is provided solely for implementing the pilot project.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 22, 1996.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Testimony For: This legislation is a necessary step for advancement into the next century. The bill would help meet the increasing public demand for electronic public access.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Jim Horn, prime sponsor; Nancy Zussy and Sam Hunt, Public Information Access Policy Task Force; and Denise Graham, citizen.