

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6186

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations, January 31, 1996

Title: An act relating to the Washington state organ donor medal.

Brief Description: Establishing the Washington state organ donor medal.

Sponsors: Senators Sheldon, Prentice, Wojahn, Thibaudeau, Fairley, Kohl, Bauer, Snyder, Heavey and Winsley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 1/17/96, 1/31/96 [DPS, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6186 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Sheldon, Vice Chair; Goings, Heavey and Winsley.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Hale and McCaslin.

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: Medical technology enables persons who receive donated human organs to see, to live longer, and to improve their quality of life. Yet many who are in desperate need of donated organs suffer and die on waiting lists due to a shortage of willing donors.

It is thought that increased public awareness of donors and their gift of life and sight will encourage others to donate. It is also believed that those who donate deserve to be remembered in a special way.

Summary of Substitute Bill: A Washington State Organ Donor Medal is established, consisting of an inscribed bronze medal awarded by the Governor at the request of the donor's family and friends.

An application procedure for the Washington State organ donor medal is specified. Family members of the organ donor may apply or a federally certified organ procurement organization may apply on behalf of the family member or person who consented to the organ donation as allowed in the statutes regarding human remains.

The application is made to the Governor's office. Eligibility is determined and the medal presented by the organ procurement organization.

Each eligible family of an organ donor is entitled to receive one organ donor medal unless more than one member of the family is an organ donor. In that case, an eligible family is entitled to receive one medal for each family member who was an organ donor. Duplicate medals may be purchased by eligible family members. Anyone else wishing to purchase a medal may request the permission of the eligible family to do so.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill allowed friends of the organ donor to receive medals and allowed multiple medals to be awarded. There was no provision in the original bill for verifying eligibility of the applicant. The substitute bill gives this duty to a federally certified organ procurement organization. The substitute bill clarifies the application process.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: There is a severe shortage of organs available for transplantation. Recognition of donors is a way to increase the available pool of donors. Confidentiality must be maintained. It is often cheaper for the public to fund a transplantation than it is to fund the continuing medical maintenance of patients whose organs have failed.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Irwin R. Etter, Transplant Recipients International Organization (pro); Christopher R. Blagg, Northwest Kidney Centers (pro); Henry W. Sykes (pro).