

RCW 26.60.010 Finding. Many Washingtonians are in intimate, committed, and exclusive relationships with another person to whom they are not legally married. These relationships are important to the individuals involved and their families; they also benefit the public by providing a private source of mutual support for the financial, physical, and emotional health of those individuals and their families. The public has an interest in providing a legal framework for such mutually supportive relationships, whether the partners are of the same or different sexes, and irrespective of their sexual orientation.

The legislature finds that the public interest would be served by extending rights and benefits to couples in which either or both of the partners are at least sixty-two years of age. While these couples are entitled to marry under the state's marriage statutes, some social security and pension laws nevertheless make it impractical for these couples to marry. For this reason, chapter 156, Laws of 2007 specifically allows couples to enter into a state registered domestic partnership if one of the persons is at least sixty-two years of age, the age at which many people choose to retire and are eligible to begin collecting social security and pension benefits.

The rights granted to state registered domestic partners in chapter 156, Laws of 2007 will further Washington's interest in promoting family relationships and protecting family members during life crises. Chapter 156, Laws of 2007 does not affect marriage or any other ways in which legal rights and responsibilities between two adults may be created, recognized, or given effect in Washington. [2012 c 3 § 8 (Referendum Measure No. 74, approved November 6, 2012); 2007 c 156 § 1.]

Effective date—2012 c 3 §§ 8 and 9: "Sections 8 and 9 of this act take effect June 30, 2014, but only if all other provisions of this act are implemented." [2012 c 3 § 18 (Referendum Measure No. 74, approved November 6, 2012).]

Notice—2012 c 3: See note following RCW 26.04.010.