
HOUSE BILL 3144

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2008 Regular Session

By Representatives Lias, Loomis, Hunt, Miloscia, Rolfes, Upthegrove, Linville, Green, VanDeWege, Morrell, Conway, Kelley, Nelson, Santos, and Ormsby

Read first time 01/23/08. Referred to Committee on Technology, Energy & Communications.

1 AN ACT Relating to improving outreach to consumers through creation
2 of a consumer protection web site and information line; adding new
3 sections to chapter 43.105 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that in an era of
6 consumer product recalls, increasing state emphasis on quality ratings
7 and accountability, and decreasing resources at the federal level for
8 consumer protection, there may be a gap in outreach to consumers in the
9 state. The legislature further finds that many state agencies provide
10 helpful information to consumers, but consumers may not always know
11 where to look to find such information. To remedy this potential
12 information gap, the legislature declares that a "one-stop" consumer
13 protection portal and helpline should be created so that consumers in
14 Washington state have access to clear and appropriate information
15 regarding consumer services that are available to them across state
16 government.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.105 RCW
18 to read as follows:

1 (1) The department shall coordinate among state agencies to develop
2 a web site to serve as a consumer protection portal. The department
3 shall use the business portal and the office of regulatory assistance
4 portal as a model. The web site shall serve as a one-stop web site for
5 consumer information. At a minimum, the web site must provide
6 information or links to information on:

7 (a) Insurance information provided by the office of the insurance
8 commissioner, including information on how to file consumer complaints
9 against insurance companies, how to look up authorized insurers, and
10 how to learn more about health insurance benefits;

11 (b) Child care information provided by the department of early
12 learning, including how to select a child care provider, how child care
13 providers are rated, and information about product recalls;

14 (c) Financial information provided by the department of financial
15 institutions, including consumer information on financial fraud,
16 investing, credit, and enforcement actions;

17 (d) Health care information provided by the department of health,
18 including health care provider listings and quality assurance
19 information;

20 (e) Home care information provided by the home care quality
21 authority, including information to assist consumers in finding an in-
22 home provider;

23 (f) Licensing information provided by the department of licensing,
24 including information regarding business, vehicle, and professional
25 licensing; and

26 (g) Other information available on existing state agency web sites
27 that could be a helpful resource for consumers.

28 (2) The department shall develop navigation and display standards
29 for the consumer protection portal to ensure a consistent end-user
30 experience.

31 (3) By September 1, 2008, state agencies shall report to the
32 department on whether they maintain resources for consumers that could
33 be made available through the consumer protection portal.

34 (4) The department shall make the consumer protection portal
35 available to the public by December 1, 2008.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.105 RCW
37 to read as follows:

1 (1) The department shall create a toll-free information line to
2 assist consumers in accessing services available through the consumer
3 protection portal created under section 2 of this act.

4 (2) On an annual basis, the department shall review the usage of
5 the toll-free information line and report to the legislature on whether
6 it is a cost-effective resource for consumers.

7 (3) The department may discontinue the toll-free information line
8 if it is no longer a cost-effective resource for consumers.

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