



CARPET
LIQUIDATORS
www.carpetliquidators.com

Now with 6 locations to serve you.
Wide selection of in-stock flooring.
Lowest Price Guaranteed.

If you don't love it
We'll replace it!
GUARANTEED

*On select items. Does not include installation cost. See store for details.

Local Politics

State Senate panel votes to repeal new transgender bathroom rule



Originally published January 27, 2016 at 9:22 pm Updated January 28, 2016 at 7:15 am

1 of 8 People pack a hallway outside a Senate hearing Wednesday in Olympia as they wait to listen to public testimony on a bill that would eliminate the state’s new rule allowing transgender people to use... (Ted S. Warren/The Associated Press) **More** ✓



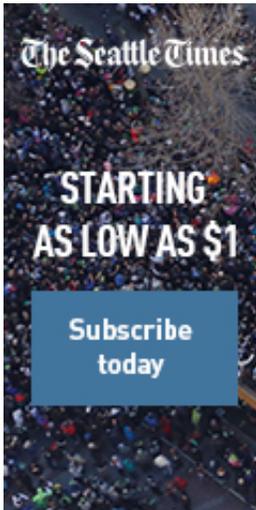
Commerce and Labor Committee Chair Michael Baumgartner said anyone who would interpret repeal of Washington’s new rule as “some kind of judgment or castigation of the transgender community,” would be wrong. Others said reversing it would victimize transgender people.

By [Walker Orenstein](#)
The Associated Press

OLYMPIA — A bill that would eliminate Washington’s new rule allowing

transgender people to use bathrooms and locker rooms consistent with their gender identity passed out of a Senate committee 4-3 Wednesday.

Democratic Sens. Bob Hasegawa, of Seattle, and Steve Conway, of Tacoma, voted against the bill, saying the rule, approved by the state Human Rights Commission, protected civil rights. Sen. Karen Keiser, a Kent Democrat, also voted against the measure.



But Commerce and Labor Committee Chairman Michael Baumgartner, R-Spokane, said anyone who would interpret repeal as “some kind of judgment or castigation of the transgender community” would be wrong. Baumgartner and many at an earlier hearing argued against the rule, saying some people could use the unquestioned access to facilities as a way to carry out sexual assaults.

Others said reversing it would victimize transgender people.

Most Read Stories

Five shot, two dead, at Seattle homeless encampment

Witness: Shooting at The Jungle in South Seattle over drugs, money

Paul Allen megayacht destroyed most of protected Caribbean coral reef, officials say

Huskies links: UW putting together 'the most underrated' recruiting class in the nation

Boeing expected to announce 777 cut Wednesday

Unlimited Digital Access. \$1 for 4 weeks.

More than 300 people signed up to testify.

The state regulation took effect last month, [generating much controversy](#), as it affects public and private buildings, including schools, restaurants, stores and most places of employment. Sen. Doug Ericksen, R-Ferndale, hopes his [Senate Bill 6443](#) will get rid of it.

The Human Rights Commission has said the new rule only clarifies the state's existing anti-discrimination law.

There are “very strong laws on the books that already say it’s illegal if people enter a restroom to harass, assault or invade the privacy of other people,” said Danni Askini, executive director of the Seattle-based Gender Justice League, in an interview before Wednesday’s hearing. Gender Justice League is a nonprofit organization that advocates for transgender people.

Kathryn Mahan testified that as a transgender woman, she does not pose a safety risk to others — but the bill could bring her harm. “If you pass this bill, it will be possible for anyone who doesn’t like me to harass me when I’m using the restroom,” she said. “Tell me, how do I prove that I have female genitals?”

A bill in the House that also seeks to eliminate the new rule takes a different approach. [House Bill 2782](#) says nothing in Washington state civil-rights law prohibits a private or public place from limiting transgender people’s access to restrooms and other such facilities when someone is “preoperative, nonoperative” or doesn’t have the genitals of the gender for which the facility is set aside.



Rep. Laurie Jenkins, D-Tacoma and chairwoman of the House Judiciary Committee, has said that measure won't get a hearing before her committee, meaning it couldn't become law.

Ericksen described his bill Tuesday as a compromise, saying it would allow local jurisdictions and businesses to decide what works best for them.

"The state shouldn't have a mandate on men using the women's locker room," he said in an interview.

Not many people in the U.S. who identify as transgender undergo surgery to change their genitals, according to a 2011 survey of 6,450 people by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. About 6 percent of transgender people surveyed had some type of female-to-male procedure and about 23 percent have had some form of male-to-female surgeries.

Askini said people under 18 largely don't have access to gender-reassignment surgery.

Paul MacLurg, of Thrive Community Fitness in Lacey, testified he and staff try hard to protect women from unwanted advances and gawking from men at his gym. Before the commission's rule he could use his best judgment when allowing people into locker rooms, he said. "Now I have no good choices," he said, later adding he has a private restroom and locker room that transgender people can use.



Looking for a Business Loan?

- ✓ Business loans up to \$500,000
- ✓ 1-5 year terms with rates as low as 5.49%
- ✓ No prepayment penalties or hidden fees
- ✓ Fast and simple online application

You Deserve a Better Loan Experience.

 Funding Circle [Check your eligibility](#)

Many in support of Eriksen’s bill noted the Human Rights Commission is not an elected body, and so does not represent the public.

Ramona Calquhoun said in an interview she understands that transgender people are allowed to use the restrooms they prefer but called the new rule scary, because of the chance that sexual predators might take advantage of it. Her voice quavered. “Even mentioning anything puts you in a legally bad position to get sued,” she said.

Lucas Leek, a 49-year-old transgender man, argued it’s unfair to take away a fundamental right under the fear of a possibility.

“It’s a basic human right,” he said after the hearing.

Jan Shannon, assistant pastor at The United Church of Christ in Spokane, made the long trip over the mountains to get to Olympia. She, a few church members and some friends left a day early, just in case. They wanted to stand up against the bill.

“It’s just skin,” Shannon said. “Humanity goes deeper than skin.”

Seattle Times staff reporter Kelsey Hamlin contributed to this report.

Email Newsletter Signup

Custom-curated news highlights, delivered weekday mornings.

Subscribe

 [View 103 Comments](#)

< Previous Story

Clarify your military record or resign, lawmaker tells state Rep. Hunt

Recommended in



The Latest:
Daughter: Arizona rancher killed in...



3 more arrested as Bundy urges refuge occupiers to...



Twitter erupts after Saudi cleric says chess is...



Seahawks' playoff win, Russell Wilson-to-Doug...

Around the Web



Ever look yourself up? This new site is addictive. If you (Instant Checkmate)



30 Female Athletes With Jaw Dropping Beauty (Your Daily Dish)



Worst Exercise For People Over 40 (MAX Workouts)



You Won't Believe Where These NFL Players Live (The Sports Drop)



They Once Had It
All: 20 NFL
Superstars That Are
(iDistracted.net)



The 1800's Girl With
the Tattooed Face
(Ancestry)

Recommended by

BUSINESS LOANS
with short term options

GET STARTED
CAN CAPITAL

Contact ▼

About the company ▼

Advertise ▼

Subscriber Services ▼

Today's Front Page

 Facebook

 Twitter

Copyright © 2016 The Seattle Times Company | [Privacy statement](#) | [Terms of service](#)