

JAY INSLEE  
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 40002 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 • (360) 902-4111 • [www.governor.wa.gov](http://www.governor.wa.gov)

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To the Honorable President and Members,  
The Senate of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Engrossed Senate Bill No. 5266 entitled:

“AN ACT Relating to theft of rental property.”

Engrossed Senate Bill No. 5266 creates a new criminal offense for a person who fails to return rental or lease property at the expiration of the rental or lease period and, after proper notice, fails to return the property within 72 hours and pay the applicable rental charges which have accrued. I have serious concerns with this approach. The bill has the effect of criminalizing debt and would disproportionately affect low-income Washingtonians and their families. These matters could more prudently be handled in a civil setting.

For these reasons I have vetoed Engrossed Senate Bill No. 5266 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay Inslee  
Governor