

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1844

As Reported By House Committee On:

Criminal Justice & Corrections

Title: An act relating to a study of released prisoners.

Brief Description: Studying effects of released prisoners on the counties.

Sponsors: Representatives Schindler, O'Brien, Cairnes, Gombosky, Crouse, Wood, B. Chandler, Cox, Benson, Sump, Hurst, McMorris, Lovick and D. Sommers.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Criminal Justice & Corrections: 2/16/99, 2/24/99 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to conduct a study regarding the impact of released prisoners on counties that have correctional facilities within their boundaries.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Ballasiotes, Republican Co-Chair; O'Brien, Democratic Co-Chair; Cairnes, Republican Vice Chair; Lovick, Democratic Vice Chair; B. Chandler; Constantine; Kagi and Koster.

Staff: Jean Ann Quinn (786-7310).

Background:

Offenders are released from Department of Corrections correctional facilities under a variety of circumstances, including upon expiration of the sentence, upon an order of parole by the Indeterminate Sentencing Review Board, as a result of earned early release time, or with varying degrees of community supervision for a fixed period of time, such as under a term of community custody or community placement.

Summary of Bill:

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy is required to conduct a study to determine: (1) the counties that have a disproportionate share of released prisoners; (2) the recidivism rate in these counties as compared to other counties; and (3) the cost impact of criminal justice and treatment services. Findings must be reported to the Legislature by January 1, 2000.

Appropriation: The sum of \$25,000 is appropriated for fiscal year 2000.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: In smaller communities like Spokane, the impact of released prisoners that remain in the county can be overwhelming. For example, there are currently 650 registered sex offenders in Spokane « out of a total population of only 300,000. It causes undue hardship on the residents of these communities, both emotional and financial. The jails are full of released prisoners who have then committed new crimes. It is important to find out what is happening in this regard across the state.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Representative Schindler, prime sponsor; and Sheriff Mark Sterk.