

RCW 9A.72.090 Bribing a witness. (1) A person is guilty of bribing a witness if he or she offers, confers, or agrees to confer any benefit upon a witness or a person he or she has reason to believe is about to be called as a witness in any official proceeding or upon a person whom he or she has reason to believe may have information relevant to a criminal investigation or the abuse or neglect of a minor child, with intent to:

(a) Influence the testimony of that person; or

(b) Induce that person to avoid legal process summoning him or her to testify; or

(c) Induce that person to absent himself or herself from an official proceeding to which he or she has been legally summoned; or

(d) Induce that person to refrain from reporting information relevant to a criminal investigation or the abuse or neglect of a minor child.

(2) Bribing a witness is a class B felony. [1994 c 271 § 202; 1982 1st ex.s. c 47 § 16; 1975 1st ex.s. c 260 § 9A.72.090.]

Finding—1994 c 271: "The legislature finds that witness intimidation and witness tampering serve to thwart both the effective prosecution of criminal conduct in the state of Washington and resolution of child dependencies.

Further, the legislature finds that intimidating persons who have information pertaining to a future proceeding serves to prevent both the bringing of a charge and prosecution of such future proceeding. The legislature finds that the period before a crime or child abuse or neglect is reported is when a victim is most vulnerable to influence, both from the defendant or from people acting on behalf of the defendant and a time when the defendant is most able to threaten, bribe, and/or persuade potential witnesses to leave the jurisdiction or withhold information from law enforcement agencies.

The legislature moreover finds that a criminal defendant's admonishment or demand to a witness to "drop the charges" is intimidating to witnesses or other persons with information relevant to a criminal proceeding.

The legislature finds, therefore, that tampering with and/or intimidating witnesses or other persons with information relevant to a present or future criminal or child dependency proceeding are grave offenses which adversely impact the state's ability to promote public safety and prosecute criminal behavior." [1994 c 271 § 201.]

Purpose—Severability—1994 c 271: See notes following RCW 9A.28.020.

Severability—1982 1st ex.s. c 47: See note following RCW 9.41.190.