
Human Services Committee

HB 1220

Brief Description: Modifying provisions affecting the appointment of indeterminate sentence review board members.

Sponsors: Representatives Hurst, Kelley, Sells, Dunshee, Kenney, Lovick, McCoy, O'Brien and Simpson; by request of Indeterminate Sentence Review Board.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds two members to the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board and clarifies the duties of the chair.

Hearing Date: 1/25/07

Staff: Sonja Hallum (786-7092).

Background:

When the Sentencing Reform Act (SRA) was enacted in 1981, Washington changed from an indeterminate to a determinate sentencing scheme. Under the indeterminate scheme, the Board of Prison Terms and Paroles had jurisdiction over the committed offenders and would decide when the offender would be paroled and under what circumstances the offender's parole could be revoked. The judge would recommend a minimum term, but other responsibilities rested with the board.

In 1986, the Board of Prison Terms and Paroles was redesignated the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board (ISRB). The ISRB assumed the responsibility of supervision, parole, and revocation of those persons sentenced to felony offenses prior to July 1, 1984, which was the effective date of the SRA. The legislature contemplated phasing out the ISRB as more and more prisoners were sentenced under the SRA. In 1986, the legislature provided that the ISRB would cease to exist on June 30, 1992 and that all of its powers, functions, and duties involving persons sentenced under the indeterminate sentencing scheme would be transferred to the superior courts of Washington state. In 1989, the Legislature delayed the termination of the Indeterminate

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Sentence Review Board until 1998, and in 1997 termination of the ISRB was again delayed until June 30, 2008.

In 2001, legislation was enacted that created a type of sentencing known as "determinate plus" sentencing. In determinate plus sentencing, the court will sentence the offender to a minimum term and a maximum term. The ISRB is required to evaluate the offender prior to the expiration of the minimum term. If the evaluation does not result in the release of the offender, the ISRB must re-evaluate the offender at least once every two years up to the offender's maximum term.

Currently, the ISRB is comprised of the chair and two other members, all appointed by the Governor.

Summary of Bill:

The chair of the ISRB is designated as the director of the agency and a fully participating board member. Two members are added to the ISRB.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.