
Human Services Committee

HB 2551

Brief Description: Expanding the types of treatment programs provided under the suspended disposition alternative for juveniles.

Sponsors: Representatives Dickerson, Appleton, McCoy, Roberts, Kenney and Kagi.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows juveniles, under the suspended disposition alternative, to enter non-evidence-based treatment programs so long as the treatment program can show positive returns to the state or local government.

Hearing Date: 1/22/08

Staff: Brian Considine (786-7290).

Background:

The Juvenile Justice Act governs the disposition (or sentencing) of juvenile offenders. It contains a sentencing grid with presumptive sanctions based on the seriousness of the offense and prior criminal history. The court has several sentencing options for juvenile offenders - a standard sentencing range (Option A), suspended disposition alternative (Option B), chemical dependency disposition alternative (Option C), manifest injustice (Option D), or the mental health disposition alternative.

Under Option B, the court may impose the standard range and suspend the sentence on condition that the offender comply with one or more local sanctions and any educational or treatment requirements.

When the juvenile offender is ordered into a treatment program under Option B, the treatment programs provided to the offender must be research-based best practice programs as identified by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy or the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

If the offender fails to comply with the suspended disposition conditions, the court may order sanctions or revoke the suspended disposition and order the imposition of the original sentence.

Summary of Bill:

A juvenile offender is allowed to enter a non-research-based treatment program so long as the program can demonstrate positive returns to the state or local government, and no research-based programs are available to meet the treatment needs of the juvenile.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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