

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5308

As Reported by House Committee On: Public Safety

Title: An act relating to establishing the commercially sexually exploited children statewide coordinating committee.

Brief Description: Establishing the commercially sexually exploited children statewide coordinating committee.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, Carrell, Darneille, Padden, Kline, Hargrove, Fraser, Chase, Keiser, Conway, Cleveland and Tom).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Public Safety: 3/12/13, 4/2/13 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by Committee)

- Creates the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Statewide Coordinating Committee.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Goodman, Chair; Roberts, Vice Chair; Klippert, Ranking Minority Member; Hayes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Holy, Moscoso, Pettigrew, Ross and Takko.

Staff: Sarah Koster (786-7303).

Background:

In 2010 the Center for Children and Youth Justice received a two-year grant from the Children's Justice Interdisciplinary Task Force to develop a protocol for responding to cases of commercially sexually exploited children. In developing the protocol, the Center for Children and Youth Justice sought input from key stakeholders around the state. The

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protocol which was developed as a result, the Washington State Model Protocol for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children, recommended, in addition to local teams and task forces, a statewide coordinating committee, which would convene annually to receive reports from local task forces on the incidence of commercially sexually exploited children in their area and on local coordinated community response practices and results, as well as make recommendations for policy and/or legislative changes that would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local activities.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Statewide Coordinating Committee (Committee) is established to address the issue of children who are commercially sexually exploited, examine the practices of local and regional entities involved in addressing sexually exploited children, and make recommendations on statewide laws and practices.

The Committee is convened by the Office of the Attorney General. The Committee members include representatives of:

- each caucus in the House of Representatives and the Senate;
- the Office of the Governor;
- the Department of Social and Health Services, Children's Administration;
- the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration;
- the Office of the Attorney General;
- the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- the Administrative Office of the Courts;
- the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs;
- the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission;
- the Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys;
- the Office of Public Defense;
- the Center for Children and Youth Justice;
- three community service providers that provide direct services to commercially sexually exploited children;
- two nongovernmental organizations familiar with the issues affecting commercially sexually exploited children;
- the Superior Court Judges' Association;
- the Washington Association of Juvenile Court Administrators;
- any existing chairs of regional task forces on commercially sexually exploited children;
- the criminal defense bar;
- the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy; and
- the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs.

The duties of the Committee include, but are not limited to, overseeing and reviewing the implementation of the Washington State Model Protocol for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children at pilot sites; receiving reports and data from local and regional entities regarding the incidence of commercially sexually exploited children in their areas; reviewing recommendations from local and regional entities regarding policy changes that would

improve the effectiveness of local response practices; and making recommendations regarding data collection and strategic local investments to address the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Until June 30, 2015, the Committee must meet no less than annually and report by June 30 of each year to the appropriate committees of the legislature and to any other known statewide committees addressing trafficking or the commercial sex trade.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

The amended bill provides that:

- the Committee will be convened by the Office of the Attorney General;
- the Committee's primary task is overseeing and reviewing the implementation of the Washington State Model Protocol for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children at pilot sites;
- the legislative representatives will be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate;
- the representatives of nongovernmental organization and community services providers will be appointed by the Office of the Attorney General;
- a representative of the Center for Children and Youth Justice will serve on the Committee;
- the Committee will annually report by June 30 of each year to the appropriate committees of the Legislature and to any other known statewide committees addressing trafficking or the commercial sex trade; and
- the section will expire June 30, 2015.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on April 2, 2013.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Committee created by this bill is contemplated as part of a protocol process called Project Respect, which is funded by grant and private funders. The goal was to provide a coordinated effective child-centered response to commercially sexually exploited children (which are known federally as domestically sex trafficked minors). The focus of the project was to develop a protocol, which was done through statewide summits involving law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, juvenile court administrators, and others, having a victim-centered discussion on what to do with these children.

The protocol was released at the end of November with a great deal of consensus; a revised version, with some changes suggested by prosecutors, will be released this month. The Committee is for receipt of information for on the ground implementations and looking at

how data collection efforts can be improved, with that information ultimately getting reported to the Legislature. It is possible to get some federal grants to help with data collection. Some improvements would be incorporating the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs into the Committee, having this Committee report to the committee created in Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1291, and changing the name of the Committee to clarify that it is connected to the protocol.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Lonnie Johns-Brown, Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs; and Bobbe Bridge, Center for Children & Youth Justice.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.