

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1966

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS, APRIL 5, 1993

Brief Description: Implementing juvenile justice racial disproportionality study recommendations.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Wineberry, Leonard, Appelwick, Foreman, Riley, Cooke, H. Myers, Lemmon, Basich, Kessler, Holm, J. Kohl and Anderson)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators A. Smith, Chairman; Quigley, Vice Chairman; Hargrove, McCaslin, Nelson, Niemi, Rinehart, Roach, and Spanel.

Staff: Lidia Mori (786-7755)

Hearing Dates: April 1, 1993

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Rinehart, Chairman; Spanel, Vice Chairman; Anderson, Bauer, Bluechel, Cantu, Gaspard, Hargrove, Hochstatter, Jesernig, McDonald, Moyer, Niemi, Quigley, Snyder, Sutherland, Talmadge, West, Williams, and Wojahn.

Staff: Cindi Holmstrom (786-7715)

Hearing Dates: April 5, 1993

BACKGROUND:

In the 1991 legislative session, the Legislature provided funding to study racial disproportionality in the juvenile justice system. The study was presented to the Legislature in January 1993. The study found that youth of color are less likely than white youth to be arrested but more likely to be: referred to juvenile court, detained, not be diverted, prosecuted, adjudicated, sentenced to confinement, and confined. Of all youth of color, African American youth are the most likely to be referred to court, detained, not be diverted, prosecuted, adjudicated guilty, sentenced to confinement, and confined.

SUMMARY:

The Administrator for the Courts will develop a plan to improve data collection on juvenile offenders and submit the plan to the Office of Financial Management by September 15, 1993. The Administrator for the Courts and the Criminal Justice Training Commission will prepare a curriculum related to ethnic and cultural diversity which will be available by October 1, 1993. The Administrator for the Courts will prepare information describing juvenile laws and court procedures and make it available in language understood by all citizens. Juvenile court administrators will obtain interpreters for all non-English speaking juveniles. Consolidated juvenile services funding to counties is conditioned on the county establishing detention standards. The Administrator for the Courts will convene a work group to develop standards and guidelines for the prosecution of juvenile offenders, review any racial disproportionality in diversion and review any racial disproportionality in the use of detention. The Juvenile Disposition Standards Commission will review current and proposed sentencing standards and guidelines for potential adverse impacts on racial and ethnic minority youth. The implementation of the legislation is subject to the availability of funds.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:

The bill is made contingent upon funding in the omnibus appropriations act.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

The problems regarding the disparity of treatment of youth of color can be remedied and this legislation is a first step. We believe that all youth should be treated fairly and equally.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: James Kelly, Washington State Commission on African American Affairs; Dr. George Bridges, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Washington; Rosalie McCale, Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee; Jerry Wasson, Director, Department of Juvenile Rehabilitation; Margaret Casey, Juvenile Court Administrators and The Children's Alliance (pro); Mike Doubleday, City of Seattle (pro); Michael Curtis, Office of Administrator for the Courts