
SENATE BILL 5236

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1995 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl, Hargrove, Long, Franklin, Prentice, Spanel and Fraser

Read first time 01/16/95. Referred to Committee on Human Services & Corrections.

1 AN ACT Relating to intervention services for persons involved in
2 prostitution; and creating new sections.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that a number of
5 people, mostly women, depend on prostitution for their survival or are
6 likely to enter into prostitution activities in order to survive. Many
7 of these people wish to leave or avoid prostitution, but are unable to
8 do so because of problems related to drug and alcohol abuse, sexual
9 abuse, psychological abuse and physical violence, lack of vocational
10 skills, and/or lack of housing stability. The legislature further
11 finds that people wishing to escape prostitution often fail to do so
12 after receiving some assistance in the form of social services, because
13 their treatment is not comprehensive in addressing all the physical and
14 psychological problems that drove these people to become prostitutes in
15 the first place. The legislature also finds that there is a high cost
16 to taxpayers as a result of people being recycled through the local
17 criminal justice system and incarceration, with no options to change
18 their life-style. Focusing our efforts on treatment and intervention
19 rather than incarceration is fiscally responsible and over the long run

1 will save money. It is the intent of the legislature to establish a
2 pilot project using existing assistance programs to address
3 comprehensively the problems of persons who are prostitutes and who
4 wish to abandon this activity. It is also the intent of the
5 legislature, to the extent possible, to make use as peer counselors in
6 this pilot project those who have escaped prostitution.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The department of social and health
8 services, within available funding and using available programs, shall
9 implement a pilot project for prevention and intervention in
10 prostitution activities. "Prostitution" includes but is not limited to
11 topless dancing, nude dancing, prostitution, escort services, and other
12 behavior undertaken by persons who become involved in prostitution
13 activities due to economic, emotional, chemical dependency, or other
14 reasons coercive in nature. The pilot project shall have two
15 objectives: (1) The prevention of new workers entering into
16 prostitution and (2) treatment and intervention for those already
17 working as prostitutes. The treatment and intervention objective shall
18 include the following treatment and training elements: Counseling and
19 treatment related to alcohol and drug abuse, sexual abuse, and
20 battering and violence, peer counseling, health counseling services,
21 housing relief, basic education, vocational training, and job training.
22 Vocational training and job training include apprenticeship
23 training programs, job readiness, job placement, child care, education,
24 job training, and other basic support services necessary to help a
25 person enter the traditional job market.

26 The department shall provide bilingual services as necessary to
27 assure the success of project participants.

28 The department may not enroll more than fifty persons into the
29 pilot project at one time. Income assistance eligibility criteria
30 apply to project applicants. Pilot project participants may receive
31 other services through department programs incorporated into the pilot
32 project, such as chemical dependency programs and job training
33 programs, if the participant meets the eligibility criteria of the
34 specific program. The department of social and health services may act
35 cooperatively with the employment security department to meet the
36 training objectives of the project through programs already undertaken
37 jointly by the two agencies.

1 The project shall terminate on July 1, 1997, unless specifically
2 extended by the legislature. All project participants shall cease to
3 receive assistance through the pilot project on July 1, 1997. The
4 department shall report to the appropriate committees of the
5 legislature on the successes and failures of the project and shall
6 recommend to the legislature whether additional legislative action is
7 needed to address the problems related to prostitution.

--- END ---