

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 2350

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to the Washington state crime information center.

Brief Description: Directing the Washington state crime information center to provide law enforcement agencies with access to sex offender central registry information.

Sponsors: Representatives McDonald, Mulliken, Thompson, Dunn, Lambert, Mason and Sullivan.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Criminal Justice & Corrections: 1/20/98 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/7/98, 93-0.

Passed Legislature.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Ballasiotes, Chairman; Benson, Vice Chairman; Koster, Vice Chairman; Quall, Ranking Minority Member; O'Brien, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cairnes; McCune; Mitchell; Radcliff and Sullivan.

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background: Washington State Crime Information Center (WASIC system). The WASIC is located in the records division of the Washington State Patrol and functions under the direction of the chief of the Washington State Patrol. The center serves to coordinate crime information, by means of data processing, for all law enforcement agencies throughout the entire state.

It provides access to the National Crime Information Center, to motor vehicle and driver license information and to such other public records as may be accessed by data processing and which are pertinent to law enforcement. In addition, other files that can be found in the WASIC system include hot sheets (listing dangerous felons), a listing of people that are wanted for felony or misdemeanor crimes or have no contact orders, inmates under Department of Corrections community corrections status, files listing

stolen and wanted vehicles, outstanding warrants, identifying children whose parents, custodians, or legal guardians have reported as having run away from home, identifiable stolen property, and such other files as may be of general assistance to law enforcement agencies.

Sex Offender Central Registry. The Washington State Patrol maintains a central registry of persons required to register as sex offenders. Sex offenders must register with the county sheriff within 24 hours of being released from confinement and within 10 days of changing his or her residential address. Sex offenders who move to Washington from another state or a foreign country must register within 30 days of establishing residence.

The county sheriff forwards the collected information and fingerprints of each registered sex offender to the Washington State Patrol for entry in the Sex Offender Central Registry. Although, each individual county independently maintains records on the sex offenders within their respective counties, there is not a state-wide system that allows law enforcement officers to obtain quick information on a sex offender who may have traveled from outside of his or her home county.

The WASIC system and Sex Offender Central registry operate as two separate registries.

Summary of Bill: Washington State Crime Information Center (WASIC system) & Sex Offender Central Registry. The Washington State Patrol must include information relating to sex offenders in its WASIC system. All law enforcement agencies throughout the state will have access to the Sex Offender Central Registry. The merging of the WASIC system and the Sex Offender Central Registry must take place by June 30, 1999.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: This bill takes effect June 30, 1999.

Testimony For: A man was sighted watching and playing with children on a Tacoma playground. Several parents called the police. However, when the police arrived and questioned the man he said he was merely being "friendly." The officers ran his name and drivers license through the WASIC system and the system showed that there were no current warrants on him. The officers advised the concerned parents "not to worry". If the local law enforcement officers had access to the state sex offender central registry they would have found out this man had been convicted for several sex offenses in the past. Although, each individual county independently maintains records on the sex offenders within their respective counties, there is not a state-wide system that allows law enforcement officers to obtain quick information on a sex offender who may have traveled from outside of his home county. This new system will allow all law

enforcement agencies and its officers throughout the state to have access to the sex offender central registry on a routine basis.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Joyce McDonald (pro).