

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5005

As Reported By House Committee On:
Criminal Justice & Corrections

Title: An act relating to sentencing for multiple violent crimes.

Brief Description: Concerning concurrent and consecutive sentencing for violent offenses.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Long, Hargrove, McCaslin, Haugen, Zarelli, Johnson, Winsley, Goings, Rasmussen, Oke and Roach).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Criminal Justice & Corrections: 4/1/97, 4/4/97 [DP].

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; Blalock; Delvin; Mitchell; Robertson and Sullivan.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Cairnes; Dickerson and Hickel.

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background: When a person is convicted of two or more current violent offenses, even if arising from separate and distinct acts of criminal conduct, the crimes are sentenced concurrently with each other.

When a person is convicted of two or more current *serious* violent offenses arising from separate and distinct criminal conduct, the crimes are sentenced consecutively to each other.

Summary of Bill: When a person is convicted of two or more current violent offenses arising from separate and distinct criminal conduct, the crimes are sentenced

consecutively to each other unless the person's sentence would be longer if he or she was sentenced concurrently.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: It is not fair for an offender to get away with serving a concurrent sentence for a number of multiple violent crimes that he or she committed. A person should have to serve the maximum amount of time for each individual offense that he or she has committed through a consecutive sentence. This bill is a way to hold offenders accountable for their actions and criminal misconduct.

Testimony Against: This bill is not needed. Although an offender cannot be sentenced consecutively, a person who commits two or more crimes at the same time automatically has his or her points increased under the Sentencing Reform Act. There is no need to pass a bill for something that judges and prosecutors already have the authority to do.

Testified: Senator Long, prime sponsor; Robert Shilling, Seattle Police Department (pro); and Karen Klein, Washington Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (con).