

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 2350

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, February 19, 1998

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: Human Services & Corrections: 2/19/98 [DP-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

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

Signed by Senators Long, Chair; Zarelli, Vice Chair; Franklin, Hargrove, Kohl and Schow.

Staff: Fara Daun (786-7459)

Background: The Washington State Patrol (WSP) records division maintains both a sex offender central registry and the Washington State Crime Information Center (WACIC).

WACIC coordinates crime information for all law enforcement agencies in the state. It provides access to the National Crime Information Center, motor vehicle and driver's license information, hot sheets (listing dangerous felons), lists of persons wanted for felonies or misdemeanors, those with no contact orders, outstanding warrants, inmates in community corrections, stolen and wanted vehicle lists, children identified as runaways, identifiable stolen property, and other general assistance files pertinent to law enforcement. It does not contain sex offender registration information.

Although each county maintains records on sex offenders within the county, local law enforcement does not presently have access to the central registry. This has led to a situation where local law enforcement told parents "not to worry" about a man playing with children on a Tacoma playground. The man had several convictions for sex offenses but no current warrants, and told police that he was just being "friendly." Although police checked WACIC, no information about his status as a sex offender appeared.

Summary of Bill: WSP must include the sex offender central registry in the WACIC database and the merger must take place by June 30, 1999. The effect will be to provide local law enforcement officers with routine access to the sex offender central registry.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on June 30, 1999.

Testimony For: Law enforcement needs the ability to have information available on a statewide basis. The Washington State Patrol has been unclear on its authority to disseminate the information in the sex offender central registry in such a database. The bill would make the authority clear. The fact that a person is a convicted sex offender is in the record, but is not available in the field.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Joyce McDonald, prime sponsor (pro); Mike Patrick WSCPO (pro); John Broome, WSP (answer questions).