

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6117

As Reported By House Committee On:
Criminal Justice & Corrections

Title: An act relating to interference with school activities.

Brief Description: Increasing penalties for persons who interfere with school activities.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators McCaslin and Winsley).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Criminal Justice & Corrections: 2/23/00 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

It is a gross misdemeanor to interfere with, by force or violence, a registered or certified sports official performing his or her duties. Additionally, persons committing such an offense may be excluded from participating in or attending the activity at which the offense occurred for up to one year.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Ballasiotes, Republican Co-Chair; O'Brien, Democratic Co-Chair; Cairnes, Republican Vice Chair; Lovick, Democratic Vice Chair; B. Chandler; Constantine and Kagi.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Koster.

Staff: Chad Barnes (786-5793).

Background:

Currently, it is a gross misdemeanor to interfere by force or violence with school personnel, students, or those under contract with schools or school districts while in the performance of their duties or studies. Additionally, if the act of force or

violence is committed by a student he or she may be suspended or expelled. It is also a gross misdemeanor to intimidate by threat of force or violence school personnel or students while in the performance of their duties or studies. Upon conviction for either offense, the offender is subject to a fine of up to \$500 and/or imprisonment in jail for not more than six months.

Summary of Bill:

It is a gross misdemeanor to interfere by force or violence with a sports official certified by or registered with the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association.

If the offender is a student, and the offense occurs at an interscholastic activity, the student may be excluded from participating or attending the activity at which the offense was committed for up to one year.

If the offender is not a student, upon conviction, the offender may not enter the school where the crime was committed, or attend the interscholastic activity in which the crime was committed, for up to one year.

It remains a gross misdemeanor to intimidate by threat of force or violence school personnel or students while in the performance of their duties or studies.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Numerous states are now considering or have passed similar laws to protect sports officials. This bill will provide an added measure of reassurance to sports officials and possibly help in recruiting new officials.

(Concerns with suggested amendments) School districts have not developed policies to ensure that the reporting required by RCW 13.04.150 takes place.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Bob West, Washington State Official Sports National Association; Ken Jones, Washington State Official Sports National Association; and Mike Ryherd, Teamsters.

(In support with suggested amendments) Bob Maier, Washington Educational Association.