

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1560

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
State & Local Government, March 31, 1999

Title: An act relating to the state toxicology laboratory.

Brief Description: Enabling the bureau of forensic laboratory services.

Sponsors: House Committee on State Government (originally sponsored by Representatives McMorris, Scott, Ballasiotes, Mitchell, Romero, Dickerson, McDonald, Poulsen, Bush, Constantine, Fortunato and Murray; by request of Forensic Investigation Council).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 3/31/99 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Hale, Haugen, Horn and Kline.

Staff: Sharon Swanson (786-7445)

Background: The State Toxicology Lab was established in conjunction with the University of Washington Medical School and performs all necessary toxicological procedures requested by all coroners, medical examiners, and prosecuting attorneys. The lab is currently funded by disbursements from a full-service restaurant, full-service private club, and sports club entertainment facility license fees. The crime lab provides laboratory services to analyze and scientifically handle any physical evidence related to any crime.

The Forensic Investigations Council is actively involved in oversight and preparation of the budgets of both the crime lab and toxicology lab, and approves both budgets prior to their formal submission to the Office of Financial Management.

Summary of Bill: All powers, duties, functions, and employees of the State Toxicology Lab are transferred to the Bureau of Forensic Laboratory Services, which is created within the Washington State Patrol, to combine the toxicology and crime lab as of July 1, 1999.

The Forensic Investigations Council is involved in oversight and assistance with the preparation of both budgets, and must approve both budgets prior to formal submission to the Office of Financial Management. The council must submit three names to the chief of the Washington State Patrol to serve as possible director of the Bureau of Forensic Laboratory Services. The council must appoint a state toxicologist and establish the policies, objectives and priorities of the Bureau of Forensic Laboratory Services.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 1999.

Testimony For: This is a great bill. Moving the State Toxicology Lab will save money and provide more effective service for people.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Diane Oberquell, WSAC/Council (pro).