

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2454

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, February 27, 2002

Title: An act relating to a study by the institute for public policy to create a system to encourage investment in proven intervention and prevention programs for at-risk youth.

Brief Description: Studying programs for at-risk youth intervention.

Sponsors: Representatives Dickerson, Esser, Jarrett, Darneille, Tokuda and Haigh.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 2/20/02, 2/27/02 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Costa, Vice Chair; Carlson, Franklin, Hewitt, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Long and Stevens.

Staff: Fara Daun (786-7459)

Background: The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) is a research organization formed by the Legislature to provide nonpartisan research to the Legislature. In previous legislative sessions, WSIPP has been asked to look at the cost-effectiveness of interventions with youth at high risk for involvement in the criminal justice system. The results of that research, *The Comparative Costs and Benefits of Programs to Reduce Crime*, originally published in 1999, were significantly updated and republished in May 2001. That research and the resulting reports did not address what changes were needed for the state to implement best practices or how to forecast caseloads, crime reduction or savings as a result of implementing the programs.

Summary of Bill: WSIPP must conduct the necessary research to develop and recommend to the Legislature the criteria, processes and institutional arrangements needed to:

- State-certify proven best practices in intervention and prevention programs focused on at-risk youth;
- Estimate any resulting reductions in the state justice system caseloads; and
- Estimate the unit cost and the total cost savings for the intervention and prevention programs.

WSIPP must report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature by December 15, 2002.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on April 1, 2002.

Testimony For: This is a common sense proposal that builds on the work of WSIPP. In times of economic stress there is a need to focus funding on programs that work. The majority of the children in the juvenile justice system can be reached, even more the kids who have not yet entered the criminal justice system. There is a need to find programs that are at least revenue neutral. This reflects a policy with broad philosophical appeal: prevent crime for less money. Some of the best programs have disincentives at the local level because the savings are realized at the regional and state level rather than at the level that makes the investment. This bill could help to reduce those disincentives in the long term.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Mary Lou Dickerson (sponsor); Jim Street, Reinvesting in Youth (pro).