

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6143

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, April 5, 2001

Title: An act relating to community notification for risk level III sex and kidnapping offenders.

Brief Description: Requiring publication of level III sex and kidnapping offender notifications.

Sponsors: Senators T. Sheldon, Hargrove, Long, Costa, Roach, Snyder, McCaslin, Spanel, Winsley, Gardner, Eide, Zarelli, Rossi, Benton, Hochstatter, Swecker, Kastama, Shin, Patterson, Kline, Fraser, McAuliffe and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 4/5/01 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6143 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: In reviewing the community notification provisions for registered sex offenders, it became clear after a recent event that there are ways in which the current notification requirements may be insufficient to adequately notify the public.

Summary of Substitute Bill: In order to be qualified as a legal newspaper the paper shall, in addition to the existing qualifications, have a policy to print law enforcement notifications for level III sex and kidnapping offenders residing in the paper's county of publication. The county sheriff must submit level III sex offender community notifications to at least one legal newspaper with general circulation in the area of the sex offender's registered address or location.

The crime of interfering with community notification is created. Interfering with community notification occurs when a person removes a current level III sex offender notice that was lawfully posted by the law enforcement agency with responsibility for community notification. Interfering with community notification is a misdemeanor.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The proposed substitute bill requires legal newspapers to have a policy to print all statutorily required legal notices. It also requires the county sheriff to submit the community notification of a level III sex offender to a legal newspaper in the area of the sex offender's address, publish a current list of level III sex offenders two times each year and make the list publicly accessible through a web site. The

last section of the bill which created a misdemeanor of interfering with community notification is deleted.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Families, schools, law enforcement personnel and communities need to know where these offenders are in order to prevent future tragedies.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Tim Sheldon (pro); John Osborn, parent (pro); Gary Crane, Mason County Sheriff's Office (pro); Mike Frank, Mason County Sheriff's Office (pro); Rowland Thompson, Allied Daily Newspapers of Washington, (pro); Larry Erickson, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (pro).