

**Early Learning & Human Services
Committee**

HB 1549

Brief Description: Requiring notification to schools regarding the release of certain offenders.

Sponsors: Representatives Dahlquist, Armstrong, Hurst, Pearson, Hope, Moscoso, Dammeier, Anderson, Wilcox, McCune, Kelley and Smith; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires that at least 30 days' written notice be provided to public and private schools when a juvenile is discharged, released on parole, or other authorized release, or before the juvenile is transferred to a community residential facility, where the juvenile has committed a violent offense, a sex offense, or the offense of stalking.

Hearing Date: 2/11/11

Staff: Linda Merelle (786-7092).

Background:

Public agencies are authorized to release information to the public regarding sex offenders and kidnapping offenders when the agency determines that disclosure of the information is relevant and necessary to protect the public.

Local law enforcement agencies shall consider, based upon the offender's risk level classification, which information should be shared. The information must be relevant and accurate. For offenders classified as risk level I, the agency must share information with other appropriate law enforcement agencies. If the offender is a student, the information must be shared with the public or private school regulated under Title 28A RCW or chapter 72.40 RCW which the offender is attending, or planning to attend. For offenders classified as risk level II, the agency may also disclose information to public and private schools, child day care centers,

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family day care providers, businesses, and organizations that serve primarily children, women, or vulnerable adults, and neighbors and community groups near the residence where the offender resides, expects to reside, or is regularly found. For offenders classified as risk level III, the agency may also disclose information to the public at large.

When funded, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) is required to create and maintain a statewide registered kidnapping and sex offender website, which is available to the public. The WASPC currently maintains a website that provides electronic links to county-operated websites that offer sex offender registration information.

Summary of Bill:

At least 30 days before discharge, parole, or any other authorized leave or release, or before transfer to a community residential facility, a public agency must send written notice of the release or transfer if the youth has committed a violent offense, a sex offense, or the offense of stalking. The notice must be sent to public and private schools and the board of directors of the school district where the youth intends to reside or where the youth last attended school. If the juvenile is over age 21 or if he or she will be in the community for less than seven consecutive days on approved leave and will not be attending school, no notice is required.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.