

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6622

As of January 22, 1996

Title: An act relating to sexually violent predators.

Brief Description: Revising minimum housing qualifications for less restrictive alternative placements of sexually violent predators.

Sponsors: Senators Quigley and Haugen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 1/23/96.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Staff: Andrea McNamara (786-7483)

Background: Sexually violent predators who are in the state's custody as a result of civil commitment must be detained in a secure facility. The primary facility for sexually violent predators, the Special Commitment Center, is currently located on the grounds of the Monroe State Reformatory and is operated by the Department of Social and Health Services.

Under certain circumstances established in 1995, a court may conditionally release a committed person to a "less restrictive alternative" environment in the community. Current law requires that before a court may allow the conditional release, it must find the person (1) will be treated by a qualified treatment provider who agrees to follow certain conditions; (2) will be housed in a setting sufficiently secure to protect the public; and (3) agrees to abide by the treatment and supervision requirement imposed by the treatment provider, the court, and the Department of Corrections.

It has been suggested that additional standards are necessary to ensure that the less restrictive alternative housing arrangements are adequately secure to protect the public.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) must adopt rules establishing the minimum standards for persons or agencies seeking to provide housing to conditionally released sexually violent predators. The rules must address, at least, public safety concerns relating to the location and security of the facility, and the education, training, and experience requirements of the staff.

The court may not conditionally release a person committed as a sexually violent predator to a less restrictive alternative unless the court finds the housing arrangements and person or agency providing the housing meet the minimum standards established by DSHS in rule. In addition, the housing provider must agree in writing: to accept the person; provide the level of security required by the court; and to immediately notify the appropriate officials if the conditionally released person leaves the housing without authorization.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 19, 1996.

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