

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2468

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

Title: An act relating to the convicted offender DNA data base.

Brief Description: Facilitating the convicted offender DNA data base.

Sponsors: House Committee on Criminal Justice & Corrections (originally sponsored by Representatives Miloscia, O'Brien and Wood; by request of Governor Locke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 2/21/02, 2/27/02 [DPA-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

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

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: Washington's DNA databank includes more than 33,000 DNA profiles of violent and sex offenders convicted since 1990. Recent advances in DNA identification science allow much more rapid and accurate matching of evidence from crime scenes to these databanks. With the help of a federal grant, Washington's Crime Lab has converted its databank to the new "short tandem repeat" (STR) technology, and entered the samples into the FBI's Combined DNA Index System. This system contains more than 460,000 samples from 34 states to be used by law enforcement agencies nationwide. Another result of STR conversion was the identification of a suspect in some of the notorious Green River murders of the 1980s.

In the first ten years of Washington's databank, there were seven "cold hits" to match crime scene evidence to offenders after traditional investigative methods had failed to identify a suspect. In the past six months, using the new STR matching, there have been 14 such "cold hits" " criminals who would not have been caught without this new tool.

Offenders convicted for felony sex or violent offenses are required to have a blood sample drawn to be entered in the DNA databank.

Summary of Amended Bill: A new group of offenders are added to the existing list of those who are required to submit a biological sample (no longer a blood sample) to be entered into the convicted offender DNA data base. They are:

- adults or juveniles convicted of a felony,
- stalking under 9A.46.110,

- harassment under RCW 9A.46.020, and
- communicating with a minor for immoral purposes under RCW 9.68A.090.

Information from the data base can be used for criminal prosecution and the identification of human remains and missing persons. Testing on available samples is limited by funding available for this purpose, with priority to be given to samples of convicted felony sex and violent offenders. A fee is established as a legal financial obligation to pay for the collection of biological samples. A state DNA data base account is created in the state treasury.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: It is specified that local police departments or sheriff's offices will collect the biological sample from the offender who does not serve any term of confinement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2002.

Testimony For: We support the bill.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Larry Erickson, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs; Tom McBride, Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys.