

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6519

As Reported by House Committee On:
Criminal Justice & Corrections

Title: An act relating to county sheriffs monitoring registered sex offenders.

Brief Description: Requiring level III sex offenders to report to law enforcement every three months.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Benton, Benson, Schoesler, Carrell, Esser, Jacobsen, Pflug, Mulliken, Johnson, Honeyford, Sheldon, Roach, Kline, Oke, Rasmussen and Keiser).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Criminal Justice & Corrections: 2/17/06, 2/23/06 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows a registered sex or kidnapping offender's photograph to be updated.
- Requires a level III sex offender with a fixed residence to re-register every 90 days.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives O'Brien, Chair; Pearson, Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Kirby, Strow and Williams.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Darneille, Vice Chair.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

In 1990, the Legislature enacted the Community Protection Act, which, among other things, created a sex offender registry in Washington. A sex or kidnapping offender must register with the county sheriff in the county where he or she resides. The offender must also notify the sheriff when he or she enrolls in a public or private school or an institution of higher education. Law enforcement officials use the information in the registry to notify the public, within certain guidelines, of a sex offender's presence in the community.

When an offender registers, he or she must provide a variety of information including his or her name, address (a homeless offender must provide a description of where he or she plans to stay), date and place of birth, place of employment, crime of conviction, date and place of conviction, aliases used, Social Security number, photograph, and fingerprints.

Sex and kidnapping offenders who lack a fixed residence must check in with the county sheriff once a week. However, offenders who have a fixed residence are not required to check in on a regular basis.

Summary of Bill:

A sex or kidnapping offender's picture may be taken at any time to update the individual's file.

A level III sex offender with a fixed residence must report to the county sheriff in person every 90 days. A person may be relieved of this requirement if he or she complies with the requirement with no violations for five years.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, except for section 2, which, because of prior double amendments, takes effect on September 1, 2006.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: Re-registering every 90 days may be difficult for criminals who may be more disorganized than the average person. Imposing criminal liability upon someone for being disorganized seems harsh.

Persons Testifying: David Marshall, Washington Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and Washington Defenders Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.