

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6633

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, February 2, 2006

Title: An act relating to a record check of a metropolitan park district's job applicants, volunteers, and independent contractors.

Brief Description: Concerning background checks of metropolitan park district employees.

Sponsors: Senators Regala, Oke, Roach and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 1/26/06, 2/2/06 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6633 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Kastama, Chair; Berkey, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, Fairley, Haugen, Kline, McCaslin, Mulliken and Pridemore.

Staff: Genevieve Pisarski (786-7488)

Background: Metropolitan park districts currently do not have express authority to require a criminal record check for prospective employees, volunteers, or contractors and are concerned about the possibility of putting at risk children and vulnerable adults whom they serve and believe that background checks help identify people who have a record of improper conduct in the past. As political subdivisions of the state, metropolitan park districts do not have inherent powers and need express statutory authority.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Metropolitan park districts will have to start doing criminal history record checks for job applicants, volunteers, and independent contractors who have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults, collect or disburse cash, or process credit or debit card transactions. The record checks will be done through the State Patrol criminal identification section and include a national check by the FBI. The subject of the record check will get a copy, be able to provide a record check that was already done within the last year, may have to pay the cost of the check, and can be hired on a conditional basis.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The various record check requirements are specified, rather than delegated to park districts to establish. It is more clearly established that the requirements do not apply to current employees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: Many other organizations already do background checks. District employees are already subject to checks, as needed. The State Patrol won't need additional resources to do this. There are no constitutional issues or legitimate objections.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Nancy Davis, Metro Parks Tacoma.