

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2214

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to the criminal justice assistance account.

Brief Description: Defining criminal justice purposes for the municipal criminal justice assistance account.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Haugen, Prince, Wang and Edmondson; by request of Task Force on City/County Finances.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Local Government, June 17, 1991, DP;
Passed House, June 19, 1991, 93-0;
Amended by Senate.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Majority Report: *Do pass.* Signed by 12 members: Representatives Haugen, Chair; Cooper, Vice Chair; Ferguson, Ranking Minority Member; Mitchell, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bray; Edmondson; Horn; Nealey; Nelson; Rayburn; Wynne; and Zellinsky.

Staff: Jim Lux (786-7841).

Background: In June 1990, the Legislature provided state funding and increased local taxing authority to expand local government criminal justice efforts. The legislation contained language restricting the purposes for which the money could be used and required local governments to continue their current levels of criminal justice funding.

As with any major new funding program, problems were experienced with implementation. The Task Force on City and County Finances heard testimony in the fall of 1990 and developed corrective legislation for the 1991 Session. Substitute House Bill 1137 provided administrative relief to local governments, particularly small counties and cities, by easing the definition of criminal justice purposes to cover certain civil activities when the civil activities were a minor part of the cost. This eliminated the requirement that in every situation criminal and civil costs had to be separated for determining eligibility for state

reimbursement. Many local jurisdictions did not have accounting and reporting systems to meet this requirement. The second problem addressed by SHB 1137 was the determination of a workable benchmark for monitoring the supplanting of funds (1989 actual criminal justice operating expenditures) and to include guidelines for expenditures that could be excluded from the benchmark calculation.

Late in the legislative session, two amendments were added. Local taxing authority was provided for Yakima County and the city of Seattle's Municipal Court Information System was to be integrated with the state administrator for the courts' District and Municipal Information System (DISCIS). Failure to integrate and use the state system by a certain date would result in the withholding of state allocations of criminal justice funding.

The governor vetoed Section 3 of SHB 1137 that contained the subsection requiring the Seattle/state information system integration. As a result, the amendatory language of SHB 1137 pertaining to the easing of the criminal justice purposes definition and the establishment of the 1989 benchmark are eliminated from the section of law dealing with allocations to high crime cities.

Summary of Bill: The amendatory language of SHB 1137 pertaining to high crime cities is added to RCW 82.14.320. The definition of criminal justice purposes and the benchmark determination are then consistent for high crime cities with all the other sections of law governing state allocations of criminal justice monies to local governments.

Effect of Senate Amendment(s): Any city with a population exceeding 400,000, currently Seattle, must have an agreement with the Office of the Administrator of the Courts to utilize the district and municipal court information system (DISCUS). If no agreement exists by January 1, 1992, Seattle shall not receive any further distributions from the Municipal Criminal Justice Assistance Account until such an agreement is in place. City municipal court system integration with DISCUS must be operational and in use no later than January 1, 1994. The implementation date is contingent upon funds being made available by the Legislature.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The definition of criminal justice purposes and the calculation of existing funding levels for local

criminal justice purposes consistent for high crime city allocations with the requirements governing all other state allocations for local criminal justice assistance are made.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: (All Pro): Bill Closner, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs; Mike Doubleday, city of Seattle; and Kathleen Collins, Association of Washington Cities.