

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5418

*As Passed House
April 19, 1991*

Title: An act relating to criminal justice.

Brief Description: Creating an interagency criminal justice work group.

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Thorsness, Rasmussen, Nelson and Talmadge).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Judiciary, April 5, 1991, DPA;
Appropriations, April 8, 1991, DPA(APP w/o JUD);
Passed House, April 19, 1991, 94-0.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY**

Majority Report: *Do pass as amended.* Signed by 15 members: Representatives Appelwick, Chair; Ludwig, Vice Chair; Padden, Ranking Minority Member; Paris, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Broback; Forner; Hargrove; Inslee; Mielke; Riley; Scott; D. Sommers; Tate; Vance; and Wineberry.

Minority Report: *Do not pass.* Signed by 3 members: Representatives Belcher; R. Meyers; and H. Myers.

Staff: Bill Perry (786-7123).

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS**

Majority Report: *Do pass as amended by Committee on Appropriations and without amendment by Committee on Judiciary.* Signed by 28 members: Representatives Locke, Chair; Inslee, Vice Chair; Spanel, Vice Chair; Silver, Ranking Minority Member; Morton, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appelwick; Belcher; Bowman; Braddock; Brekke; Dorn; Ebersole; Ferguson; Fuhrman; Hine; Holland; Lisk; May; McLean; Mielke; Nealey; Peery; Rust; H. Sommers; Valle; Vance; Wang; and Wineberry.

Staff: Pat Shelledy (786-7149).

Background: Since the Sentencing Reform Act of 1981 was enacted, the Legislature has enacted several changes in the act's sentencing provisions. The Legislature has not engaged in a comprehensive review of the act to determine whether the act's purposes are being achieved, whether those purposes should be revised, and whether intermediate punishments could be used as alternatives to total confinement. Recently, the problem of police brutality in another state has come to the public's attention.

Summary of Bill: A task force on sentencing of adult criminal offenders is created. The task force is comprised of 14 members, including 12 legislators and two governor appointees. The objectives of the task force are to determine whether the articulated purposes of the sentencing reform act remain valid or should be modified, study the incarceration patterns of adult offenders, determine the extent to which alternatives to total confinement are being used and to make recommendations to ensure that alternatives to total confinement are used when appropriate, and determine whether sentencing options should be expanded. The task force must report to the Legislature by December 15, 1992.

The Washington Institute for Public Policy will conduct a study on the problem of police harassment and brutality. The Institute must report to the Legislature by December 1, 1991.

The Criminal Justice Training Commission's basic law enforcement training and education standards must include training criminal justice personnel to reduce and eliminate police harassment and brutality. The interagency criminal justice work group is statutorily created. The group is required to, among other things: (1) identify issues which are problems for state and local law enforcement agencies; (2) develop immediate and long-range plans for alleviating prison and jail overcrowding; and (3) study and make recommendations regarding police brutality and harassment.

Fiscal Note: Available on substitute.

Appropriation: Removed.

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

Testimony For: (Judiciary): The bill will assure continuance of a useful cooperative effort to address law enforcement issues.

(Appropriations): None.

Testimony Against: (Judiciary): The bill is an unnecessary limitation on executive branch flexibility.

(Appropriations): None.

Witnesses: (Judiciary): Mike Redman, Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (in favor); and Sid Sidorowicz, Governor's Office (opposed).

(Appropriations): None.