

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5128

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SYNOPSIS AS ENACTED

Brief Description: Requiring notification to witnesses upon release or escape of serious drug offenders.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Madsen, Jesernig and Rasmussen).

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

BACKGROUND:

The victim, witness, and police notification programs that currently exist require the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and the Department of Corrections to notify victims and witnesses of the release of juvenile and adult violent or sex offenders. The police are sent the notices as a matter of course, but victims and witnesses must request notice of the release of such offenders in writing.

A similar notification program is suggested for witnesses who have testified against persons convicted of serious drug offenses and who are about to be released by the Department of Corrections.

SUMMARY:

Upon written request, the Department of Corrections must notify those witnesses who testified against an inmate in a court proceeding involving a serious drug offense if the inmate is about to be released from total confinement. The notification must take place at the earliest possible date, and in no event later than ten days before release.

The department is also required to notify the appropriate witnesses whenever an inmate convicted of a serious drug offense escapes or is recaptured.

Other persons specified in writing by the prosecuting attorney must also receive notice of a serious drug offender's release, escape, or recapture.

"Serious drug offense" means a violation of the Controlled Substances Act involving Schedule I or II narcotic drugs or counterfeit substances that are narcotic drugs.

This act is contingent upon funding in the Omnibus Appropriations Act.

VOTES ON FINAL PASSAGE:

Senate	46	0
House	97	0

EFFECTIVE: July 28, 1991