

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**2SSB 5167**

**AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 18, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Amending the juvenile justice act.

**SPONSORS:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Nelson, Rasmussen, Newhouse, Stratton, Roach, Niemi and Talmadge).

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE**

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5167 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Nelson, Chairman; Thorsness, Vice Chairman; Erwin, Hayner, L. Kreidler, Madsen, Newhouse, Rasmussen, and A. Smith.

**Staff:** Jack Brummel (786-7428)

**Hearing Dates:** February 4, 1991; February 7, 1991; February 8, 1991

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS**

**Majority Report:** That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5167 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Craswell, Vice Chairman; Bailey, Bauer, Bluechel, Cantu, Gaspard, Hayner, Johnson, L. Kreidler, Matson, Metcalf, Murray, Newhouse, Niemi, Owen, Saling, L. Smith, Talmadge, West, Williams, and Wojahn.

**Staff:** Cindi Holmstrom (786-7715)

**Hearing Dates:** March 8, 1991; March 11, 1991

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY**

**BACKGROUND:**

The state's juvenile justice system was reformed in 1977 with the passage of a new juvenile justice code. The reforms involved proportionate decision-making standards for intake and sentencing, the provision of full due-process rights, and the elimination of all court jurisdiction over non-criminal behavior. For sentencing purposes, juvenile offenders are assigned points based on their age, criminal history, and current offense and are categorized as minor or first offenders, middle offenders, or serious offenders.

Many officials who work in the juvenile justice system have recommended a review of the system.

**SUMMARY:**

A Juvenile Issues Task Force is created to review past legislation and study issues pertinent to juveniles. The task force has 29 members; ten members are legislators, two of which serve as co-chairs with a third co-chair appointed by the Governor. The remainder of the task force, appointed by the Governor, includes a variety of professionals and citizens involved in juvenile justice issues. The task force is to be funded by the Department of Social and Health Services and staffed by personnel available from the membership of the task force.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested January 23, 1991

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

The juvenile justice system works pretty good for serious and minor offenses. Middle offenders present a problem for the system which needs to be studied. The Blue Ribbon Task Force is important because the system could be improved to meet current needs.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** PRO: Norm Maleng, King County Prosecuting Attorney; Judge Terrence Carroll, King County Superior Court; Judge Kelley Arnold, Pierce County Superintendent; Paul Trause, Jerry Wasson, DSHS; Harold Delia, King County Youth Services; Curt Sharar, Assoc. of Counties; Larry Fair, WA Council on Crime & Delinquency; Margaret Casey, WA State Catholic Conference, Children's Initiative

**HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):**

The task force has 32 members. The Governor is to ensure that the racial diversity of the Governor's appointments to the task force reflects the racial diversity of the juveniles served by the state. DSHS, in cooperation with the Commission on African American Affairs, is to contract for an independent study of racial disproportionality in the juvenile justice system.