

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6295

AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 12, 1992

Brief Description: Enabling a court to sentence a person convicted of driving under the influence to attend a panel of victims of similar crimes.

SPONSORS: Senators Erwin, A. Smith, M. Kreidler, Newhouse, Nelson, Rasmussen, McCaslin and von Reichbauer

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Lidia Mori (786-7755)

Hearing Dates: February 4, 1992; February 5, 1992

BACKGROUND:

The first DWI victims impact panel in the United States was implemented in the early 1980s by Judge Admire of Redmond's King County Northeast District Court. There are now at least six operating DWI victims impact panel programs in Washington and several others are being developed.

A DWI offender, as part of his or her sentence, may be required to attend a DWI victims impact panel and be brought face to face with people who have suffered personal tragedies as a result of drunk driving. Currently, however, there is no statutory authority enabling judges to make attendance at a DWI victims impact panel a condition of the sentence.

SUMMARY:

A court may require a person who is convicted of a DWI or who enters a deferred prosecution program to attend a DWI victims impact panel. The victims impact panel is an educational program focusing on the emotional, physical, and financial suffering of victims who were injured by persons convicted of driving while under the influence of intoxicants.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Original panel was started in 1964 and the panel members have seen how much good they do.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: PRO: Shirley Anderson, DWI Victims Panel; Kathleen Rusk, DWI Victims Panel, MADD; Rich Aanderud, Puyallup Pride; Larry Anderson, DWI Victims Panel; Gerry Sheehan, ACLU