

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 6352

C 13 L 04

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Revising provisions concerning selection of telephone calling systems for offenders in state correctional facilities.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Children & Family Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Stevens, Hargrove, Esser, Schmidt, Poulsen, Berkey, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles).

Senate Committee on Children & Family Services & Corrections
House Committee on Criminal Justice & Corrections

Background: The Department of Corrections (DOC) is authorized to intercept and record telephone calls from an offender or resident of a state correctional facility. The statute requires that these calls be collect calls with operator announcement to the call receiver that the call is coming from a prison resident and that it may be monitored and recorded.

With the development of calling cards and three-way calling capability, concern exists that offenders are able to make calls circumventing these requirements. Technology exists which would make the calls more secure and less expensive to inmate families, but this improved technology cannot be used with the current outdated equipment in place at DOC facilities.

Summary: The Department of Corrections is authorized to approve a new calling system which is at least as secure as the previous system. Consideration must be given to public safety, reduction of telephone fraud, and low-cost options. The requirement that offenders make only "collect" calls is removed. Provisions requiring the department to be able to monitor calls and make operator announcements remain in effect.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 48 0

House 92 2

Effective: June 10, 2004