Washington State
House of Representatives
Office of Program Research

**BILL
ANALYSIS**

Criminal Justice & Corrections Committee

HB 1344

Brief Description: Requiring information on fugitives to be posted on the internet.

Sponsors: Representatives P. Sullivan, Simpson and Dunn.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Corrections (DOC) to post a list of escapees, considered high risk offenders, on the department's web site.

Hearing Date: 2/1/05

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background:

An inmate in community custody who willfully absconds from supervision and who makes his or her whereabouts unknown by failing to make contact with the Department of Corrections (DOC) is generally deemed an escapee and a fugitive from justice. Upon conviction, these fugitives are guilty of a class C felony offense under the state's criminal code.

On November 4, 2003, for a six-month trial period, the King County Journal began publishing a weekly list of fugitives wanted by the DOC. The King County Journal, along with help from the DOC, published the names, photographs, and brief descriptions of six fugitives wanted by the state Department of Corrections Fugitive Apprehension Team. The fugitives were all convicted felons who had escaped the DOC's community supervision.

Outside of the King County Journal's six-month pilot program, the DOC does not post information about offenders on its web site nor does the department have a web site link to information or photographs about offender escapees.

Summary of Bill:

The DOC must, within available resources, post a list of persons deemed escapees on its web site. The DOC must focus the web site on those escapees and fugitives considered high risk offenders. A report on the progress of the web site must be submitted to the Legislature by December 31, 2005.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, however, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.