

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6244

As Passed House:

March 4, 2008

Title: An act relating to facilities to house offenders violating community custody.

Brief Description: Addressing the housing of offenders who violate community custody.

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senator Carrell).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Human Services: 2/25/08, 2/26/08 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/4/08, 95-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Department of Corrections (DOC) to conduct an analysis of statewide capacity to appropriately confine those offenders who violate conditions of community custody; to make recommendations for future capacity; and to report results to the Governor and Legislature by November 15, 2008.
- Requires the DOC to consider the need to decrease reliance on local correctional facilities and the costs and benefits of developing a violator treatment center to provide inpatient treatment, therapies, and counseling.
- Requires the DOC to work with the planning processes for local jurisdictions if the DOC recommends locating or co-locating new facilities.
- Authorizes the DOC to proceed with any conversion of existing facilities that are appropriate to house violators.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Dickerson, Chair; Roberts, Vice Chair; Ahern, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Darneille, McCoy and O'Brien.

Staff: Linda Merelle (786-7092).

Background:

An offender who violates the conditions of community custody may be returned to prison to serve any remainder of his or her sentence, may be sanctioned up to 60 days for each violation in a local correctional facility, or may be required to submit to partial confinement such as work release or home detention, treatment, or community restitution.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Corrections (DOC) must analyze the needed capacity throughout the state to appropriately confine offenders who violate community supervision and must formulate recommendations for future capacity. The DOC must consider the need to decrease reliance on local jails and the costs and benefits of developing a violator treatment center.

If the DOC recommends locating or co-locating new violator facilities, it must work with local land use planning processes or apply local zoning laws. The DOC must report its results to the Governor and the Legislature by November 15, 2008.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill will give more flexibility to the Department of Corrections (DOC) to come up with facilities to house offenders who violate community custody conditions. The local jails are housing over 90 percent of these offenders, and we need to take the pressure off of them. Jails are feeder systems for state prisons. If we can manage the population of the local jails, we can also take the pressure off the state system. We want to take care of our problems and not dump them on local government. The Offender Re-entry Act assumed responsibility of housing offenders. The DOC is uncertain of the future of current housing contracts. The DOC is very interested in taking a systematic look at the housing for offenders who violate their conditions and this bill gives the DOC that opportunity.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Carrell, prime sponsor; Eldon Vail, Department of Corrections; and Rashi Gupta, Washington State Association of Counties.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.