

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1177

As of March 16, 2023

Title: An act relating to a missing and murdered indigenous women and people cold case investigations unit.

Brief Description: Creating a missing and murdered indigenous women and people cold case investigations unit.

Sponsors: House Committee on Community Safety, Justice, & Reentry (originally sponsored by Representatives Lekanoff, Orwall, Reed, Berry, Ramel, Callan, Doglio, Timmons, Walsh, Reeves, Chopp, Duerr, Gregerson, Taylor, Wylie, Stonier, Pollet, Davis, Kloba and Ormsby; by request of Attorney General).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/28/23, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 3/20/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People Cold Case Investigations Assistance Unit within the Office of the Attorney General.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Staff: Ryan Giannini (786-7285)

Background: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People Task Force. In 2021, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People (MMIWP) Task Force was convened by the Office of the Attorney General (AGO). The MMIWP Task Force was tasked to review the laws and policies pertaining to missing and murdered indigenous people and to develop related recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature.

In August 2022, the MMIWP Task Force released an interim report which contained

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findings, data, and recommendations.

Summary of Bill: The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People Cold Case Investigations Assistance Unit is created within the AGO, subject to appropriation, to assist federal, municipal, county, and tribal law enforcement agencies with solving cold cases involving missing and murdered indigenous women and people.

The unit may proactively offer assistance to a law enforcement agency with primary jurisdiction over a missing or murdered indigenous woman or person cold case, but it may not investigate or assist with a criminal investigation except at the request of the law enforcement agency, in which case, the assistance must be limited to the content of the request.

The unit must prioritize assistance to jurisdictions that do not have sufficient resources to investigate cold cases.

The unit must include an advocate or case navigator.

Appropriation: The bill contains a section or sections to limit implementation to the availability of amounts appropriated for that specific purpose.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.