

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6203

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As of January 30, 2026

**Title:** An act relating to out-of-state convictions.

**Brief Description:** Concerning out-of-state convictions.

**Sponsors:** Senators Boehnke, Dozier, Torres, Goehner, Schoesler, Wagoner, Christian and Dhingra.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Law & Justice: 2/02/26.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Clarifies that out-of-state convictions include convictions in a foreign country for purposes of calculating an offender's score on the felony sentencing grid.

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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

**Staff:** Ryan Giannini (786-7285)

**Background:** Sentencing. The Sentencing Reform Act (SRA) provides a determinate sentencing system in which sentencing courts generally impose sentences within a standard range. The standard range for a person is determined by reference to a grid, which provides a base sentence according to the person's offender score and the seriousness level of the present offense. The offender score is a point total based on a person's qualifying prior convictions. Certain prior convictions are excluded from offender score calculations if the person remains crime free in the community for a specified period of time following release.

State v. Lewis. On July 17, 2025, the Washington Supreme Court issued its opinion in *State v. Lewis* on whether out-of-state convictions include convictions entered by courts of

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foreign nations for purposes of offender scoring.

The court noted that while foreign convictions may be considered part of a defendant's criminal history, nothing in the SRA, related statutes, or Washington statutes in general clearly establishes whether the Legislature meant to include foreign convictions for the purpose of offender scoring. The court concluded that the SRA is ambiguous on this question. Due to this ambiguity, the court applied the rule of lenity that strictly construes ambiguous criminal laws in favor of the defendant. The court held that out-of-state convictions do not include convictions in foreign countries.

**Summary of Bill:** Out-of-state convictions include convictions in a foreign country if the convictions were obtained with sufficient safeguards for fundamental fairness and due process for the accused.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 23, 2026.

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

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