
HOUSE BILL 2526

State of Washington **69th Legislature** **2026 Regular Session**

By Representatives Stearns, Davis, Parshley, and Leavitt

Read first time 01/16/26. Referred to Committee on Community Safety.

1 AN ACT Relating to prostitution; amending RCW 9A.88.110 and
2 9A.88.120; creating a new section; and prescribing penalties.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** Commercial sexual exploitation targets the
5 most vulnerable: Women, children, and young adults, primarily in
6 communities of poverty; indigenous communities; communities of color;
7 foster care; and those who identify as LGBTQ+. Many exploited adults
8 were first exploited as children. Addressing both the causes and the
9 impacts of exploitation requires a comprehensive two-pronged
10 approach:

11 (1) A public health system that holistically supports victims and
12 survivors with well-resourced transition services, housing, and
13 community-based trauma recovery services.

14 (2) Suppression and deterrence of the demand from buyers, who are
15 the source of both most of the violence against the exploited
16 individuals, and the enormous profits being paid to third-party
17 exploiters.

18 The legislature intends to enhance the legal interventions
19 available to law enforcement, courts, and the community to hold
20 buyers accountable for their role in commercial sexual exploitation
21 while increasing resources and support for survivors.

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 9A.88.110 and 2017 c 232 s 1 are each amended to
2 read as follows:

3 (1) A person is guilty of (~~(patronizing a prostitute)~~) commercial
4 sexual exploitation if:

5 (a) Pursuant to a prior understanding, he or she pays a fee or
6 provides anything of value to another person as compensation for such
7 person or a third person having engaged in sexual conduct with him or
8 her; or

9 (b) He or she pays or agrees to pay a fee or provide anything of
10 value to another person pursuant to an understanding that in return
11 therefor such person will engage in sexual conduct with him or her;
12 or

13 (c) He or she solicits or requests another person to engage in
14 sexual conduct with him or her in return for a fee or providing
15 anything of value.

16 (2) The crime of (~~(patronizing a prostitute)~~) commercial sexual
17 exploitation may be committed in more than one location. The crime is
18 deemed to have been committed in any location in which the defendant
19 commits any act under subsection (1)(a), (b), or (c) of this section
20 that constitutes part of the crime. A person who sends a
21 communication to (~~(patronize a prostitute)~~) engage or solicit another
22 in commercial sexual conduct is considered to have committed the
23 crime both at the place from which the contact was made pursuant to
24 subsection (1)(a), (b), or (c) of this section and where the
25 communication is received, provided that this section must be
26 construed to prohibit anyone from being prosecuted twice for
27 substantially the same crime.

28 (3) For purposes of this section, "sexual conduct" has the
29 meaning given in RCW 9A.88.030.

30 (4) (~~(Patronizing a prostitute)~~) Commercial sexual exploitation
31 is a (~~(misdemeanor)~~) class C felony.

32 **Sec. 3.** RCW 9A.88.120 and 2015 c 265 s 20 are each amended to
33 read as follows:

34 (1)(a) In addition to penalties set forth in RCW 9A.88.010 and
35 9A.88.030, an adult offender who is either convicted or given a
36 deferred sentence or a deferred prosecution or who has entered into a
37 statutory or nonstatutory diversion agreement as a result of an
38 arrest for violating RCW 9A.88.010, 9A.88.030, or comparable county
39 or municipal ordinances shall be assessed a fifty dollar fee.

1 (b) In addition to penalties set forth in RCW 9A.88.090, an adult
2 offender who is either convicted or given a deferred sentence or a
3 deferred prosecution or who has entered into a statutory or
4 nonstatutory diversion agreement as a result of an arrest for
5 violating RCW 9A.88.090 or comparable county or municipal ordinances
6 shall be assessed a fee in the amount of:

7 (i) One thousand five hundred dollars if the defendant has no
8 prior convictions, deferred sentences, deferred prosecutions, or
9 statutory or nonstatutory diversion agreements for this offense;

10 (ii) Two thousand five hundred dollars if the defendant has one
11 prior conviction, deferred sentence, deferred prosecution, or
12 statutory or nonstatutory diversion agreement for this offense; and

13 (iii) Five thousand dollars if the defendant has two or more
14 prior convictions, deferred sentences, deferred prosecutions, or
15 statutory or nonstatutory diversion agreements for this offense.

16 (c) In addition to penalties set forth in RCW 9A.88.110, a person
17 who is either convicted or given a deferred sentence or a deferred
18 prosecution or who has entered into a statutory or nonstatutory
19 diversion agreement as a result of an arrest for violating RCW
20 9A.88.110 or a comparable county or municipal ordinance shall be
21 assessed a fee in the amount of:

22 (i) (~~One thousand five hundred~~) Three thousand dollars if the
23 defendant has no prior convictions, deferred sentences, deferred
24 prosecutions, or statutory or nonstatutory diversion agreements for
25 this offense;

26 (ii) (~~Two thousand five hundred~~) Five thousand dollars if the
27 defendant has one prior conviction, deferred sentence, deferred
28 prosecution, or statutory or nonstatutory diversion agreement for
29 this offense; and

30 (iii) (~~Five thousand~~) Ten thousand dollars if the defendant has
31 two or more prior convictions, deferred sentences, deferred
32 prosecutions, or statutory or nonstatutory diversion agreements for
33 this offense.

34 (d) In addition to penalties set forth in RCW 9A.88.070 and
35 9A.88.080, a person who is either convicted or given a deferred
36 sentence or a deferred prosecution or who has entered into a
37 statutory or nonstatutory diversion agreement as a result of an
38 arrest for violating RCW 9A.88.070, 9A.88.080, or comparable county
39 or municipal ordinances shall be assessed a fee in the amount of:

1 (i) Three thousand dollars if the defendant has no prior
2 convictions, deferred sentences, deferred prosecutions, or statutory
3 or nonstatutory diversion agreements for this offense;

4 (ii) Six thousand dollars if the defendant has one prior
5 conviction, deferred sentence, deferred prosecution, or statutory or
6 nonstatutory diversion agreement for this offense; and

7 (iii) Ten thousand dollars if the defendant has two or more prior
8 convictions, deferred sentences, deferred prosecutions, or statutory
9 or nonstatutory diversion agreements for this offense.

10 (2) The court shall not reduce, waive, or suspend payment of all
11 or part of the assessed fee in this section unless it finds, on the
12 record, that the offender does not have the ability to pay the fee in
13 which case it may reduce the fee by an amount up to two-thirds of the
14 maximum allowable fee.

15 (a) A superior court may, as described in RCW 9.94A.760, set a
16 sum that the offender is required to pay on a monthly basis towards
17 satisfying the fee imposed in this section.

18 (b) A district or municipal court may enter into a payment plan
19 with the defendant, in which the fee assessed in this section is paid
20 through scheduled periodic payments. The court may assess the
21 defendant a reasonable fee for administrative services related to the
22 operation of the payment plan.

23 (3) Fees assessed under this section shall be collected by the
24 clerk of the court and remitted to the treasurer of the county where
25 the offense occurred for deposit in the county general fund, except
26 in cases in which the offense occurred in a city or town that
27 provides for its own law enforcement, in which case these amounts
28 shall be remitted to the treasurer of the city or town for deposit in
29 the general fund of the city or town. Revenue from the fees must be
30 used for local efforts to reduce the commercial sale of sex
31 including, but not limited to, increasing enforcement of commercial
32 sex laws.

33 (a) At least fifty percent of the revenue from fees imposed under
34 this section must be spent on prevention, including education
35 programs for offenders, such as john school, and rehabilitative
36 services for victims, such as mental health and substance abuse
37 counseling, parenting skills, training, housing relief, education,
38 vocational training, drop-in centers, and employment counseling.

39 (b) Two percent of the revenue from fees imposed under this
40 section shall be remitted quarterly to the department of commerce,

1 together with a report detailing the fees assessed, the revenue
2 received, and how that revenue was spent.

3 (c) Revenues from these fees are not subject to the distribution
4 requirements under RCW 3.50.100, 3.62.020, 3.62.040, 10.82.070, or
5 35.20.220.

6 (4) For the purposes of this section:

7 (a) "Statutory or nonstatutory diversion agreement" means an
8 agreement under RCW 13.40.080 or any written agreement between a
9 person accused of an offense listed in subsection (1) of this section
10 and a court, county, or city prosecutor, or designee thereof, whereby
11 the person agrees to fulfill certain conditions in lieu of
12 prosecution.

13 (b) "Deferred sentence" means a sentence that will not be carried
14 out if the defendant meets certain requirements, such as complying
15 with the conditions of probation.

--- END ---