

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1140

C 316 L 95

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Revising procedures for using criminal history in sentencing of offenders.

Sponsors: House Committee on Corrections (originally sponsored by Representatives Ballasiotes, Horn, Blanton, Costa and Honeyford).

House Committee on Corrections
Senate Committee on Law & Justice

Background: The sentencing of adult felons is governed by the Sentencing Reform Act (SRA). The SRA sets out standard ranges of punishment to guide judicial sentencing decisions. The standard ranges are determined from two factors, one of which is the felon's criminal history. A defendant's criminal history is "scored" and assigned a number of points. The more serious the criminal history, the higher the defendant's point total, and in turn, the longer the defendant's standard range of confinement.

In general, each felony in the defendant's criminal history is separately scored. This general rule has many exceptions, some of which are noted below.

"Washout" provisions. Some offenses in a defendant's criminal history are not scored if enough time has elapsed since the time of the conviction. When this happens, the prior offense is said to "wash out" from the defendant's criminal history. The SRA's washout provisions for prior adult convictions are as follows: