

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1858

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations, March 30, 1995

Title: An act relating to the office of crime victims advocacy.

Brief Description: Establishing the office of crime victims advocacy in the department of community, trade, and economic development.

Sponsors: Representatives Ballasiotes, Costa, Robertson, Cody, Morris, Regala, Chopp, Ogden, Mitchell, Tokuda, Appelwick, Honeyford, Radcliff, Blanton, Dickerson, Campbell, Conway, Kessler and Ebersole.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 3/28/95, 3/30/95 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Sheldon, Vice Chair; Drew, Hale, Heavey, McCaslin and Winsley.

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: The Office of Crime Victims Advocacy was created by executive order in 1990 and placed in the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development. The office provides ombudsman service to crime victims by helping them locate and obtain services in their communities.

The office currently administers a grant program to enhance the funding for community-based treatment services available to victims of sex offenders.

These grants are awarded on a competitive basis to local governments, nonprofit community groups, and nonprofit treatment providers. Activities that can be funded through this grant program are limited to: (1) activities that provide effective treatment to victims of sex offenders; (2) activities that increase access to and availability of treatment for victims of sex offenders, particularly underserved populations; and (3) activities that create, coordinate, or build on existing programs to make effective use of resources to provide treatment services to victims of sex offenders.

Summary of Amended Bill: The Office of Crime Victims Advocacy is established by statute in the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development. The office is directed to administer grant programs for sexual assault treatment and prevention services, assist communities in planning and implementing services for crime victims, advocate on behalf of crime victims in obtaining needed services and resources, and advise local and state governments on practices, policies, and priorities that impact crime victims.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The change is editorial. In order to emphasize the office's assistance to all victims of crime, the activities associated therewith are listed first. The grant administration functions are listed last.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 24, 1995.

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

Testimony For: The activities of this office are too important for their continued existence to be left to the Governor's whim. Establishing the office in statute will better assure continuity of service to the public.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Helen Harlow, Tennis Shoe Brigade (pro); Deborah Ruggles, Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs (pro).