

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2098

As Reported by House Committee On:
Public Safety
General Government & Information Technology

Title: An act relating to establishing a statewide training program on human trafficking laws for criminal justice personnel.

Brief Description: Establishing a statewide training program on human trafficking laws for criminal justice personnel.

Sponsors: Representatives Orwall, Kochmar, Goodman, Moscoso, Young, Zeiger, Harmsworth and Santos.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Public Safety: 2/17/15, 2/20/15 [DP];

General Government & Information Technology: 2/23/15 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy to establish a statewide training program on human trafficking laws for criminal justice personnel and to provide a biennial report to the Legislature on the program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Goodman, Chair; Orwall, Vice Chair; Klippert, Ranking Minority Member; Hayes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Griffey, Moscoso, Pettigrew and Wilson.

Staff: Cassie Jones (786-7303).

Background:

The Office of Crime Victims Advocacy (OCVA) is a program of the Department of Commerce, which performs the following functions:

- advocates on behalf of victims obtaining needed services and resources;

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- administers grant funding for community programs working with victims of crimes;
- assists communities in planning and implementing services for crime victims; and
- advises local and state government agencies of practices, policies, and priorities which impact crime victims.

The OCVA administers grant funding to community agencies providing services to human trafficking victims. The OCVA defines human trafficking as occurring when a person uses violence, deception, or threats to force or coerce another person to provide labor or commercial sex, and to prevent that person from leaving the situation. It also occurs when a person recruits, harbors, transports, provides, or obtains another person knowing that force, fraud, or coercion will be used to exploit the other person for labor or commercial sex. Travel is not always involved.

Summary of Bill:

The OCVA must establish a statewide training program on human trafficking laws for criminal justice personnel. The training must be provided where possible by an entity that has experience in developing coalitions, training, programs, and policy on human trafficking. The OCVA must provide a biennial report to the Legislature on the statewide training program, with a focus on the effectiveness of the training.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Washington leads the country in human trafficking laws. The Department of Commerce looked at how the new human trafficking laws are implemented. Some jurisdictions are using the new laws and some are not. This is not because some jurisdictions do not have human trafficking; human trafficking exists everywhere. It is because there is a lack of knowledge in some jurisdictions about the fines and laws. Half of the fines collected stay in the local jurisdictions. Jurisdictions have used these fines to fund investigations. The remainder goes to help the victims. Not all counties may participate in using these tools due to lack of training. These laws are tools for law enforcement and for helping victims.

Human trafficking survivors may have had numerous contacts with law enforcement that did not recognize the signs. This is why training and accountability for law enforcement are so important. There is an example of a municipal judge in King County who sentenced a sex buyer with a \$35 fine. This is in contrary to the updated law enacted in 2012. Washington has top rated human trafficking laws, but police need to be trained in the new laws.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Orwall, prime sponsor; Jeri Moomaw, Washington Engage; and Rose Gunderson, Washington Engage.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT & INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY**

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Senn, Vice Chair; MacEwen, Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McCabe, Morris and Takko.

Staff: Derek Rutter (786-7157).

**Summary of Recommendation of Committee On General Government & Information
Technology Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Public Safety:**

No new changes were recommended.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) None.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.