

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1395

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*As Reported By House Committee on:  
Judiciary*

**Title:** An act relating to maintaining the Washington state patrol crime laboratory system.

**Brief Description:** Maintaining the Washington state patrol crime laboratory locations.

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Ludwig, Nealey, Bray, Haugen, Lisk, Braddock, Grant, Neher, Edmondson, Prince, Ogden, Rayburn, Riley, H. Myers, Morris, Jones, R. Meyers, Wynne, Chandler, G. Fisher, Basich, Inslee, Orr, Sprenkle, Scott, Dellwo, Jacobsen and Brekke.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Judiciary, February 20, 1991, DP.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
JUDICIARY**

**Majority Report:** *Do pass.* Signed by 16 members: Representatives Appelwick, Chair; Ludwig, Vice Chair; Padden, Ranking Minority Member; Paris, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Broback; Forner; Hargrove; Inslee; Mielke; H. Myers; Riley; Scott; D. Sommers; Tate; Vance; and Wineberry.

**Minority Report:** *Do not pass.* Signed by 3 members: Representatives Belcher; Locke; and R. Meyers.

**Staff:** Bill Perry (786-7123).

**Background:** In 1980, the Legislature statutorily created a crime laboratory system within the Washington State Patrol. The crime lab system is designed to provide handling and analysis of physical evidence relating to any crime. The State Patrol is also directed to provide training for local law enforcement personnel.

Although permanent statute does not require any specific structure or organization for the crime lab system, budget provisos and administrative practice have resulted in a system that consists of a number of "satellite" labs around the State. Currently there are six labs. They are located

in Seattle, Tacoma, Spokane, Everett, Kelso, and Kennewick. Some of the labs provide a more complete range of laboratory services than others.

The State Patrol has considered closing the satellite labs and consolidating services.

**Summary of Bill:** The State Patrol is required to maintain the crime lab system as it existed on December 31, 1990 with respect to the location of laboratories and the level of service provided at each location.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested January 31, 1991.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For:** The satellite labs provide service to law enforcement agencies in parts of the State where having to rely on one or a few centrally located labs would result in great inefficiency and delay.

**Testimony Against:** The State Patrol ought to have the administrative flexibility to organize the crime lab system in the most efficient manner possible.

**Witnesses:** Norm Maleng, King County Prosecutor (in favor); Jim Nagle, Walla Walla County Prosecutor (in favor); Jack Burchard, Okanogan County Prosecutor (in favor); Art Curtis, Clark County Prosecutor (in favor); Andy Miller, Benton County Prosecutor (in favor); Dawn Larsen, Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs (in favor); Ed Crawford, Washington State Patrol (opposes); Larry Mount, Whatcom County Sheriff (in favor); Joe Hawe, Clallam County Sheriff (in favor); Randy Hamilton, Chehalis Police Department (in favor); and Jim Kennedy, Benton County Sheriff (in favor).