

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESHB 1534

C 267 L 91

Synopsis As Enacted

Brief Description: Providing training for investigating and prosecuting sexual assault cases.

By House Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Representatives H. Myers, Beck, Riley, R. King, Tate, Anderson, Vance, Cooper, Ludwig, Hargrove, Padden, Bray, Rasmussen, Sheldon, Leonard, Forner, Brekke, Peery, Belcher, G. Fisher, Morris, Grant, Jones, O'Brien, Orr, Wang, Heavey, Roland, Paris and Winsley).

House Committee on Judiciary
House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Law & Justice
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background: Some prosecutors, law enforcement officers, public defenders, and victim advocates lack specialized training concerning sexual assault and child sexual abuse. Trained victim advocates may assist victims and their families through the investigation and prosecution of the case. Rape crisis centers currently funded through the Department of Social and Health Services could offer advocacy services for victims if funded.

Summary: The Criminal Justice Training Commission must offer an integrated, intensive training session on investigating and prosecuting sexual assault cases for prosecutors, police officers, public defenders, and victim advocates. The training must emphasize professionalism and sensitivity towards victims and their families. The commission must seek advice on the training program from prosecutors, police officers, public defenders, and the Washington coalition of sexual assault programs. The training must be self-supporting through participant fees.

Rape crisis centers eligible for funding from the Department of Social and Health Services may apply for grants for hiring and training victim advocates to assist victims and their families through the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases. The victim advocates must complete the training program offered by the Criminal Justice Training Commission or at the center's option, an alternative training program. Non-state funding sources must provide 25 percent of the funding for the victim

advocate grants. The grant program is subject to funding in the budget.

The legislature finds that sexual assault cases are difficult to prosecute successfully, that victim advocates may assist the victims and their families through investigation and prosecution, and that counties should give sexual assault cases priority, especially when the victims are children.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	98	0	
Senate	48	0	(Senate amended)
House	95	0	(House concurred)

Effective: July 1, 1991