

HOUSE BILL REPORT

2SSB 5830

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to youth gang violence reduction.

Brief Description: Creating gang risk intervention pilot programs.

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Stratton, Erwin, Rasmussen, Williams, Talmadge, Wojahn, Vognild, Pelz, Snyder and Owen).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Human Services, April 4, 1991, DP;
Passed House, April 19, 1991, 98-0;
Passed Legislature, 98-0.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
HUMAN SERVICES**

Majority Report: *Do pass.* Signed by 11 members: Representatives Leonard, Chair; Riley, Vice Chair; Winsley, Ranking Minority Member; Tate, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson; Beck; Brekke; Hargrove; Hochstatter; R. King; and H. Myers.

Staff: David Knutson (786-7146).

Background: Increasing youth gang involvement, with its accompanying crime and violence, threatens the property and safety of the citizens of Washington, and the future of the youth themselves. Local government, law enforcement and the educational system are coping with the many social, business and criminal justice costs arising from youth gang activities.

Other jurisdictions have attempted creative statutory approaches to youth gang risk intervention, such as cultural awareness programs, targeted counseling efforts and special business and job apprenticeship mentoring. In a social matrix where traditional educational and counseling methods are ineffective, many creative new ideas are being tried throughout the country.

Summary of Bill: A youth gang violence reduction program is established to develop a positive prevention and

intervention pilot program for elementary and secondary school youth. The program utilizes multi-agency cooperation, along with efforts of business and local government.

The Department of Community Development may contract with school districts, developing proposals to curtail violence and reduce drop-out rates, by using broad-based community and business support, and a "retreat" format. The Gang Risk Prevention and Intervention Pilot Program will include the elements of: counseling for targeted at-risk students, including their parents and families; exposure to positive sports and cultural activities; job and job search training; positive interaction with law enforcement; and cultural awareness retreats at facilities provided by the division of juvenile rehabilitation.

The Department of Labor and Industries will provide assistance with apprenticeship programs, including application help and a joint apprenticeship mentor program, presented at cultural awareness retreats.

The Employment Security Department will provide job counselors to assist at cultural awareness retreats, providing information and testing, and coordinating the involvement of small business owners and corporate managers in a "business mentor program."

The act is contingent upon funding in the Omnibus Appropriations Act.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Prevention and early intervention services for juvenile gang members and potential members are needed. A coordinated approach with schools, community organizations, and parents has the best chance of reducing gang activity.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Harold Phillips, Employment Security; Margaret Casey, Children's Budget; and Mike Doubleday, City of Seattle.