

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5185

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 12, 1991

Brief Description: Clarifying "criminal justice purposes" for local government criminal justice assistance.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Newhouse, Niemi, Anderson, McMullen, Thorsness, Madsen and A. Smith; by request of Task Force on City/County Finances).

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5185 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Nelson, Chairman; Thorsness, Vice Chairman; L. Kreidler, Madsen, Newhouse, and Rasmussen.

Staff: Jack Brummel (786-7428)

Hearing Dates: February 15, 1991

BACKGROUND:

In 1990 the Legislature appropriated \$99.4 million to counties and cities to support the expansion of their criminal justice systems. The enabling legislation specified that the moneys were to be expended exclusively for criminal justice purposes and were not to replace or supplant existing funding. Some local governments do not have accounting systems which separate criminal and civil costs, and are uncertain of their ability to comply with the law. Local governments are also uncertain about the basis for determining existing levels of funding.

Some local governments are issuing checks rather than warrants. Currently, the abandoned property statute does not allow local governments to retain uncashed checks.

SUMMARY:

Criminal justice purposes are activities that substantially assist the criminal justice system or provide ancillary benefit to the civil justice system. Existing funding means actual operating expenditures for criminal justice purposes for calendar year 1989. Extraordinary expenditures and major nonrecurring capital expenditures are not included in the determination of 1989 actual operating expenditures.

Uncashed checks are included in the abandoned property statute and may be held by local officials.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

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

TESTIMONY FOR:

The Legislature's Task Force on City and County Finances has agreed with the counties and the cities that the bill's language will solve an important accounting problem for local jurisdictions.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Tom Vosberg, Washington Association of Counties; Stan Finkelstein, Association of Washington Cities