

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6109

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE, JANUARY 29, 1992

Brief Description: Modifying requirements for disposition of forfeited firearms.

SPONSORS: Senators Nelson and Rasmussen

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Nelson, Chairman; Thorsness, Vice Chairman; Erwin, Hayner, M. Kreidler, Madsen, Newhouse, and Rasmussen.

Staff: Jon Carlson (786-7459)

Hearing Dates: January 27, 1992; January 29, 1992

BACKGROUND:

Firearms illegally used or possessed may, in certain circumstances, be seized and forfeited. When weapons are forfeited, one of three actions must be taken. Firearms that are illegal for anyone to possess are to be destroyed. Up to 10 percent of legal firearms may be retained by law enforcement agencies for their own use. The remainder of the forfeited firearms are to be sold at auction to commercial sellers.

The proceeds from the sale of forfeited firearms are divided as follows: The agency that seized the firearms is reimbursed for the cost of storage and sale. The rest of the proceeds go to the state Department of Wildlife for use in its firearms training program.

SUMMARY:

A new division is made of the proceeds from the sale of forfeited firearms, and law enforcement agencies are given an alternative to sale for disposing of firearms.

The agency that seizes and sells the firearms may keep 60 percent of the proceeds. The remaining 40 percent goes to the state firearms range account for use in the purchase and development of land, and the construction or improvement of range facilities. In lieu of selling forfeited firearms, an agency may trade them for other firearms or police equipment.

Upon order of forfeiture, the court shall require any illegal firearm to be disassembled into parts. Illegal parts must be destroyed and legal parts are to be auctioned to commercial sellers.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: yes

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

Law enforcement has emphasized that the proceeds from the sale of seized and forfeited firearms are an important means of financial assistance to local agencies.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: PRO: Rick Jensen, Washington State Patrol; Ted Cowan, King County Outdoor Sports Council; Colonel Mel Pfanicuche, citizen; Howard Risdon, Washington Arms Collectors; John Hosford, Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms; Bruce Turner, Washington Arms Collectors; Al Woodbridge, Washington State Rifle and Pistol Association; Stan Finkelstein, Association of Washington Cities