

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1026

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As Reported By House Committee On:  
Local Government

**Title:** An act relating to counties contracting for public defender services.

**Brief Description:** Excepting public defender services from county competitive bid requirements.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Ludwig, H. Myers, Chandler, Bray, Edmondson and Springer.

**Brief History:**

Report by Committee on:  
Local Government, February 5, 1993, DPS.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives H. Myers, Chair; Bray, Vice Chair; Edmondson, Ranking Minority Member; Reams, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dunshee; R. Fisher; Horn; Rayburn; Romero; Springer; Van Luven; and Zellinsky.

**Staff:** Bill Lynch (786-7092).

**Background:** Counties are required to competitively bid contracts for the purchase of materials, equipment, supplies, and services when the contract equals or exceeds \$2,500 in value.

The competitive bidding requirements do not apply to performance-based contracts for energy equipment and supplies, or to contracts for election materials. There is no exemption from the competitive bidding requirements for public defender services.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** A county with a population of less than 175,000 is not required to competitively bid contracts for public defender services.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The substitute bill limits the exemption from competitive bidding to only those counties with a population of less than 175,000.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Competent counsel is needed on both sides of the table in the criminal process or the process slows way down. An experienced attorney knows which cases to settle and which cases to bring to trial. Going with the lowest bidder will eventually cost more money because of extended appeals and unnecessary motions.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** (pro) Representative Curt Ludwig, prime sponsor; Larry Ziegler, Benton County Public Defender; and Ron Main, King County.