

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1026

As Passed Legislature

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

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

Sponsors: By House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Ludwig, H. Myers, Chandler, Bray, Edmondson and Springer.)

Brief History:

Report by Committee on:

Local Government, February 5, 1993, DPS;

Passed House, February 22, 1993, 94-0;

Amended by Senate;

Passed Legislature, April 19, 1993, 96-0.

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 Bill: Counties are not required to competitively bid contracts for public defender services.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: 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.