

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2440

As Reported By House Committee On:
Corrections

Title: An act relating to the juvenile disposition standards commission.

Brief Description: Increasing membership on the juvenile disposition standards commission.

Sponsors: Representative R. Meyers.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Corrections, February 3, 1994, DPS.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Morris, Chair; Mastin, Vice Chair; Long, Ranking Minority Member; Edmondson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; G. Cole; L. Johnson; Moak and Padden.

Staff: Kristen Lichtenberg (786-7156).

Background: The Juvenile Disposition Standards Commission evaluates existing disposition standards and recommends dispositions to the Legislature. The Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation (DJR) supplies the commission with data and with technical and administrative assistance. The commission's chair is the secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services, or the secretary's designee; in practice the chair is the director of DJR. Other commission members include a superior court judge, a prosecutor, a defense attorney, a law enforcement official, a juvenile court administrator, and three individuals interested in juvenile justice.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The bill increases the membership of the commission by adding a prosecutor, a judge, and a defense attorney. Additionally, the bill adds legislators as non-voting members.

The bill makes the commission more independent of the department. The governor appoints the chair. The commission will share staff with the Sentencing Guidelines

Commission, and the Office of Financial Management will determine the number of staff needed to supplement the sentencing guidelines staff.

The bill directs the commission to study the capacity of juvenile offender facilities, and to project whether proposed dispositions would result in exceeding capacities. The commission will also make recommendations to the Legislature on changes to the juvenile justice code. The bill directs the commission to act as a clearinghouse for information on juvenile justice and to establish a computer database of information. The commission will study the efficacy of disposition alternatives, and at least twice a year it will conduct joint meetings with the Sentencing Guidelines Commission.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute removes an appropriation section and adds specific responsibilities to the commission's duties.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The disposition standards commission membership should be enlarged to reflect geographic diversity. A stronger commission will be useful. Consolidation of the staff with the sentencing guidelines commission is workable, provided that sufficient numbers of staff are added.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Dave Fallen, Sentencing Guidelines Commission (pro). Sid Sidorowicz (neutral).