

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1333

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS, APRIL 5, 1993

Brief Description: Providing for youth gang violence reduction.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Trade, Economic Development & Housing (originally sponsored by Representatives Flemming, Leonard, Veloria, Chappell, R. Fisher, Dunshee, Linville, Eide, Franklin, Ludwig, Roland, Rayburn, Pruitt, Finkbeiner, Holm, Basich, Lemmon, Johanson, Karahalios, Jones, H. Myers, Morris, L. Johnson, Ogden and J. Kohl)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Talmadge, Chairman; Wojahn, Vice Chairman; Deccio, Erwin, Franklin, Hargrove, McAuliffe, McDonald, Moyer, Niemi, Prentice, Quigley, Sheldon, L. Smith, and Winsley.

Staff: Joanne Conrad (786-7472)

Hearing Dates: April 1, 1993

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended by Committee on Health & Human Services.

Signed by Senators Rinehart, Chairman; Spanel, Vice Chairman; Bauer, Bluechel, Cantu, Gaspard, Hargrove, Hochstatter, Jesernig, McDonald, Moyer, Niemi, Owen, Quigley, Snyder, Sutherland, Talmadge, West, Williams, and Wojahn.

Staff: Mary Poole (786-7613)

Hearing Dates: April 5, 1993

BACKGROUND:

Intensification of youth gang involvement, with its accompanying crime and violence, increasingly threatens not only the property and safety of the citizens of Washington, but the future of the youth themselves. Local government, law enforcement and the educational system are becoming overwhelmed by efforts to cope with the many social, business and criminal justice costs arising from youth gang activities.

Other jurisdictions have attempted creative statutory approaches to youth gang risk intervention, such as cultural awareness programs, targeted counselling efforts and special business and job apprenticeship mentoring. In a social matrix where traditional educational and counselling methods have proven ineffective, many creative new ideas are being tried throughout the country.

SUMMARY:

A youth gang violence program is established to develop a positive prevention and intervention pilot program for elementary and secondary school youth. The program utilizes multiagency cooperation, along with efforts of business and local government.

The Department of Community Development may contract with school districts, developing proposals to curtail violence and reduce drop-out rates, by using broad-based community and business support, and a "retreat" format. The "gang risk prevention and intervention pilot program" will include the elements of: counselling for targeted at-risk students, including their parents and families; exposure to positive sports and cultural activities; job and job search training; positive interaction with law enforcement; and cultural awareness retreats.

The Department of Labor and Industries will provide assistance with apprenticeship programs, including application help and a joint apprenticeship mentor program, presented at the cultural awareness retreats.

The Employment Security Department will provide job counselors to assist at the retreats, providing information and testing, and coordinate the involvement of small business owners in a business mentor program.

The act is contingent upon funding in the Omnibus Appropriations Act.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:

Parents are added to those who can attend cultural awareness retreats. Community organizations are added to contracting entities and duties of Department of Community Development are expanded.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR (Health & Human Services):

Gang intervention programs are experiencing success in changing youth attitudes and behavior, as demonstrated by

lower crime, higher rate of school completion and attitudinal shifts.

TESTIMONY AGAINST (Health & Human Services): None

TESTIFIED (Health & Human Services): PRO: Representative Flemming, prime sponsor; Bob Swanson, Medina Children's Services; Christina Davis, student; LaMont Carter, Medina Program; Michele Boyd, DCD; Ester Huey, Yakima Gang Prevention Coalition; Sherman Wilkins, Echo Glen Children's Center; Bonnie Parrott, parent; Glenda Tanner, Proud African American Youth Society; Joy Banks, Robert Mena, program participants; Sewanda Acutters, PAAYS participant; Bob Gulling, former gang member

TESTIMONY FOR (Ways & Means):

In 1989, Tacoma had 426 gang members, and violent crimes related to gang activity has been on the rise around the state. The bill is intended to decrease dropout rate and interactions between gangs. The bill has no general fund-state impact, and will be entirely funded by federal funds.

TESTIMONY AGAINST (Ways & Means): None

TESTIFIED (Ways & Means): Representative Flemming, original prime sponsor (pro)