

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1544

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE, MARCH 23, 1993

Brief Description: Requiring that criminal penalties set by cities and counties be the same as those set in state law.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Representatives Appelwick and Johanson)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators A. Smith, Chairman; Quigley, Vice Chairman; Hargrove, McCaslin, and Spanel.

Staff: Dick Armstrong (786-7460)

Hearing Dates: March 22, 1993; March 23, 1993

BACKGROUND:

Penalties imposed upon defendants in courts of limited jurisdiction (district and municipal courts) may vary depending on whether the defendant was cited for a violation of a state statute or a municipal ordinance. Defendants committing similar offenses may receive more or less severe penalties, depending on the origin of the laws under which they were cited.

SUMMARY:

Beginning July 1, 1994, local jurisdictions are prohibited from establishing a penalty for an act that constitutes a crime under state law if the local penalty differs from the state penalty.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

Effective Date: July 1, 1994

TESTIMONY FOR:

Punishments for crimes should not vary depending on which side of a city boundary the defendant lives. Uniformity in treatment under the criminal justice system is an important factor in promoting public confidence in the system.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Judge Robert McBeth, WA State District and Municipal
Court Judges Assn. (pro); Jackie McFadden, WA Assn. of Cities