

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SHB 1795**

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE, APRIL 1, 1993**

**Brief Description:** Regulating vehicular pursuit.

**SPONSORS:** House Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Representatives J. Kohl, Padden, Riley, Appelwick, Foreman, Roland, R. Fisher, Dellwo, Campbell, Anderson, Wineberry and Johanson)

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE**

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Quigley, Vice Chairman; Hargrove, McCaslin, Nelson, Rinehart, and Spanel.

**Staff:** Alan Caplan (786-7465)

**Hearing Dates:** March 31, 1993; April 1, 1993

**BACKGROUND:**

According to the National Highway Safety Administration, two of every five high-speed police chases result in property damage, and one in four results in bodily injury. During the 1980s, police vehicular pursuits in Washington resulted in 46 fatalities. During 1990 and 1991, such pursuits resulted in a total of six fatalities.

A law enforcement agency is not required to adopt a vehicular pursuit policy, and no statutory guidelines exist for the contents of such policies.

The Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission is responsible for programs and standards for training criminal justice personnel. Neither the Criminal Justice Training Commission nor a law enforcement agency is required to train law enforcement officers in vehicular pursuits.

**SUMMARY:**

By September 30, 1993, the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission, Washington State Patrol and Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs must develop a written model vehicular pursuit policy that satisfies certain minimum standards. By December 31, 1993, all law enforcement agencies must adopt and implement a vehicular pursuit policy.

By December 31, 1995, every full-time law enforcement officer must be trained on vehicular pursuits, and every new full-time officer must be trained within six months of employment. The Criminal Justice Training Commission, in consultation with the

Washington State Patrol and the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, must develop and conduct the training.

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:**

Guidelines must prohibit vehicular pursuits unless the suspect is reasonably believed to have committed or attempted to commit a felony and to pose a threat of serious physical harm to others.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** available

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

Police car chases result in too many deaths and too much property damage. This bill would ensure that all law enforcement agencies have comprehensive written policies regarding vehicular pursuits.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:**

An independent citizens' committee should establish guidelines for vehicular pursuits.

**TESTIFIED:** Representative J. Kohl, prime sponsor; Mark Overby, Citizens Advocating Responsible Enforcement; Gary Edwards, Thurston County Sheriff; Tim Schellberg, WASPC