

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5813

AS OF FEBRUARY 22, 1993

Brief Description: Increasing the amount of funds designated to the state toxicology laboratory.

SPONSORS: Senators Loveland and Drew

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Staff: Tom Fender (786-7414)

Hearing Dates: February 23, 1993

BACKGROUND:

The state toxicology laboratory is the principal state examiner of drug and toxic compounds that may be ingested by humans. In the course of its business, the laboratory conducts blood, drug and alcohol tests for all 280 cities, counties and state law enforcement agencies. In addition, the laboratory conducts death investigation toxicology for coroners and medical examiners in all 39 counties.

After analysis, the laboratory provides expert testimony to support prosecution within the court system. The laboratory is organizationally part of the University of Washington but is not funded or administratively supported by the university. Its chief administrator is the State Toxicologist.

Local government officials are of the opinion that the current funding provided by alcoholic beverage licensees is inadequate to support the efforts of the laboratory. They point out that the laboratory receives only 10 percent of its budget from liquor license funds and 90 percent from the Washington State Death Investigation Council fund. They believe that this funding mix is disproportionate to the services provided by the laboratory and as such, threatens its ability to provide needed services.

SUMMARY:

The minimum funding from the alcoholic beverage license fund is increased from \$150,000 to \$300,000 per biennium. Affected statutes are reindexed in accordance with previous recodifications.

Appropriation: \$300,000

Revenue: yes

Fiscal Note: requested

