

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1117

As Reported By House Committee On:
Law & Justice

Title: An act relating to penal institutions.

Brief Description: Providing a deterrence for crimes committed at county or local penal institutions.

Sponsors: Representatives Lambert, Costa, Blanton, Silver, Ballasiotes, Backlund, Robertson, Boldt, Buck, Thompson, Hargrove and Huff.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Law & Justice: 1/31/95, 2/10/95 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Padden, Chairman; Delvin, Vice Chairman; Hickel, Vice Chairman; Appelwick, Ranking Minority Member; Costa, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell; Carrell; Chappell; Cody; Lambert; McMahan; Morris; Robertson; Sheahan; Smith; Thibaudeau and Veloria.

Staff: Bill Perry (786-7123).

Background: A number of felony offenses apply only to persons who are incarcerated in state penal institutions. These crimes do not apply outside of a state prison, although similar crimes may.

For instance, generally, a person is guilty of the crime of "riot" if, acting with three or more other persons, he or she knowingly and unlawfully uses or threatens to use force, or in any way participates in the use of such force, against any other person or against property. If the actor is armed with a deadly weapon, the crime of riot is a class C felony. In all other cases under this law, the crime of riot is a gross misdemeanor. However, inmates in a state prison are guilty of the crime of "prison riot" if two or more of them use force or the threat of force to disturb the good order of the institution contrary to the commands of prison personnel. The crime of prison riot is the equivalent of a class B felony.

Other crimes that apply exclusively to inmates in state penal institutions include holding a hostage, preventing an officer from performing duties, and possessing any weapon. All of these crimes are class B felonies. Simple possession of a controlled substance by an inmate in a state prison is a class C felony.

Summary of Bill: Felony crimes that apply to inmates in state prisons are extended to apply to inmates in local jails. These crimes include prison riot, holding a hostage, preventing an officer from performing duties, possessing any weapon, and possessing any controlled substance.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The bill will allow better inmate management in local jails and will provide a needed increase in security for jail personnel.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Kurt Sharar, Washington State Association of Counties (pro); Pat Thompson, Council of County and City Employees (pro); Randy Parr, Public Safety Employees Union (pro); and Mike Meyers, King County Sheriff's Office.