

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1709

As Reported By House Committee On:

Law & Justice

Title: An act relating to earned early release.

Brief Description: Limiting certain offenses to no more than fifteen percent good time credits.

Sponsors: Representatives Carrell, Padden, Campbell, Backlund, Costa, Conway, Delvin, Robertson, Thompson, McMahan, Benton and Elliot.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Law & Justice: 2/15/95, 2/17/95 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 16 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; Sheahan; Smith; Thibaudeau and Veloria.

Staff: Rick Neidhardt (786-7841); and Pat Shelledy (786-7149).

Background: Under the Sentencing Reform Act, felony offenders receive determinate sentences. A determinate sentence is one where the length of confinement is determined at the time of sentencing; the sentence length generally is not subject to alteration based on events occurring after the sentence is imposed.

Earned early release programs. The primary exception to this system of determinate sentencing involves the operation of earned early release programs.

Earned early release programs allow inmates to shorten their sentence length if they display positive behavior during confinement. Washington law authorizes these programs to be operated both in local jails and state prisons.

An inmate earns early release by either engaging in good behavior (not violating the rules of the prison or jail) or participating in work, education, or treatment programs.

Limitations on earned early release. Current law limits how much a sentence can be reduced through earned early release. The maximum amount that a sentence can be reduced varies depending on the inmate's offense: