

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1818

As Reported By House Committee On:

Appropriations

Title: An act relating to criminal justice funding.

Brief Description: Providing for criminal justice funding.

Sponsors: Representatives R. Fisher, Robertson, Scott, Costa, Mason, Ogden, Wolfe, Conway and Cody; by request of Washington State Patrol.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 3/2/95, 3/3/95 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 31 members: Representatives Silver, Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Huff, Vice Chairman; Pelesky, Vice Chairman; Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Valle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Beeksma; Brumsickle; Carlson; Chappell; Cooke; Crouse; Dellwo; G. Fisher; Foreman; Grant; Hargrove; Hickel; Jacobsen; Lambert; Lisk; McMorris; Poulsen; Reams; Rust; Sehlin; Sheahan; Talcott; Thibaudeau and Wolfe.

Staff: John Woolley (786-7154).

Background: In 1990, the Legislature established criminal justice assistance accounts in the state treasury for counties and municipalities. At the time of their establishment, the Legislature found that "many counties and cities are unable to provide sufficient funding for additional police protection, mitigation of congested court systems, and relief of over-crowded jails."

The funding for the accounts comes from the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET). Current statute has about 5.9 percent of the MVET going to county criminal justice assistance, and about 2.4 percent going to municipalities. Funds are appropriated by the Legislature and distributed to counties based on population, crime rate, and criminal case filings.

For municipal distribution, the account is distributed based on population, crime rate, innovative criminal justice strategies, use of funds for domestic violence reduction, and costs associated with contracting with other governmental agencies for the majority of the city's law enforcement services.

The accounts were re-authorized in the 1993 legislative session, with a cap placed on the total amount of distributions for the 1993-95 biennium. For the 1995-97 biennium, there will be no dollar cap. Starting in the 1997-99 biennium, the amount distributed each fiscal year will increase only by inflation, thereby re-establishing the dollar cap.

The current estimate for the 1993-95 biennium is \$81.4 million in distributions. The current estimate for 1995-97 distributions is \$104.4 million.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The bill changes current statute by authorizing that not more than 5 percent of the funds from the account can be available for appropriation for enhancements to the State Patrol Crime Lab system as well as the continuing costs of these enhancements.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The change in the use of local criminal justice funding is limited to the State Patrol Crime Lab. The total amount available is reduced from 7 percent to 5 percent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: None.