

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6136

As Passed House:

February 27, 1998

Title: An act relating to drug offenses in background checks.

Brief Description: Including drug offenses in background checks.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Oke and Long).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 2/19/98, 2/20/98 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/27/98, 95-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Cooke, Chairman; Boldt, Vice Chairman; Bush, Vice Chairman; Tokuda, Ranking Minority Member; Kastama, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ballasiotes; Carrell; Dickerson; Gombosky and McDonald.

Staff: Douglas Ruth (786-7134).

Background: The Department of Social and Health Services requires that agencies which provide services to children and vulnerable adults conduct background checks of their employees. The background checks examine the person's record for convictions for offenses against persons, convictions for offenses relating to financial exploitation, disciplinary board final decisions, issuance of a protection order, and child abuse in civil actions. Convictions for drug-related offenses are not considered in the background check process.

Summary of Bill: The crimes of manufacturing or delivering a controlled substance and possession of a controlled substance with intent to manufacture or deliver are added to the list of convictions that the Washington State Patrol discloses in a background check. Employers requesting background checks under Title 43 are permitted to consider these convictions in the employment process.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Employers and the state should be aware of the criminal drug use of the people who are caring for our children and vulnerable adults. The bill does not exclude employment of someone with a criminal drug history; these types of convictions are only to be used as a consideration in the employment decision.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Bob Oke, prime sponsor; and Lonnie Johns-Brown, The Early Childhood Collaborative (pro).