

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1800

As Passed House

January 16, 1998

Title: An act relating to community involvement in stopping crime.

Brief Description: Assisting crime stoppers programs.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Delvin, Poulsen, Sheahan, Costa, Kessler, Dickerson, Blalock, Hatfield, Conway, Gombosky, Keiser, Cody, Morris, Ogden, Mason and McDonald).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Criminal Justice & Corrections: 2/21/97, 2/25/97 [DP];

Appropriations: 3/6/97, 3/8/97 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/14/97, 94-0;

Passed House: 1/16/98, 93-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Ballasiotes, Chairman; Benson, Vice Chairman; Koster, Vice Chairman; O'Brien, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blalock; Cairnes; Delvin; Dickerson; Hickel; Mitchell; Robertson and Sullivan.

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 31 members: Representatives Huff, Chairman; Alexander, Vice Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Wensman, Vice Chairman; H. Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Doumit, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Gombosky, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Benson; Carlson; Chopp; Cody; Cooke; Crouse; Dyer; Grant; Keiser; Kenney; Kessler; Lambert; Linville; Lisk; Mastin; McMorris; Parlette; Poulsen; Regala; D. Schmidt; Sehlin; Sheahan; Talcott and Tokuda.

Staff: Jim Lux (786-7152).

Background: Crime Stoppers is a community-based program that joins law enforcement, the community, and the media in an alliance to generate public awareness and assistance with solving crimes. These programs are usually operated by local law enforcement agencies who may televise profiles of offenders and offer rewards for information leading to the arrest of criminals. In addition, crime stopper programs may host a variety of crime prevention and diversion-type programs in area neighborhoods.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) is required to contract with the Crime Stoppers of Washington Association to provide grants to local law enforcement agencies or local jurisdictions with crime stopper programs. Grant funds will be allocated to local crime stoppers programs according to guidelines established by the Association. At least twenty-five percent of the grants given in a biennium must be for training, public awareness, and establishing new programs. Grants may be used for operating costs and newly created programs may use grant monies for rewards. Existing programs may not use grant monies for rewards. Law enforcement agencies or local jurisdictions may not receive more than one grant during each biennium. The grant may be made either to start a program or expand an existing program, but not both.

The Crime Stoppers of Washington Association must review the local programs receiving grants and report on their progress to the Legislature by the first of January of each year.

Community involvement and youth awareness are encouraged through the development of student crime stoppers programs around the state.

Null and void language is included making final adoption of the legislation contingent on funding in the 1997-99 Omnibus Appropriations Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Testimony For: (Criminal Justice & Corrections) Crime Stoppers is a vital component of the fight against crime and acts as an alternative way for local law enforcement agencies to receive information regarding felons wanted for arrest. No matter how well organized, equipped or energetic a law enforcement agency may be, it cannot function effectively without the cooperation and involvement of the

community. Crime Stoppers, with the help of the Boy Scouts of America, has also been expanded to the juvenile population as a way to allow students to take action against victimization and crime.

(Appropriations) Crime Stoppers programs have proven to be successful. After receiving start-up funding, these programs have become self-sufficient. The program will develop a statewide information link between Crime Stoppers programs and law enforcement. Crime Stoppers is a very important law enforcement investigative tool. The information generated can bring closure to cases, which helps victims and families. Citizens can report crimes anonymously.

Testimony Against: (Criminal Justice & Corrections) None.

(Appropriations) None.

Testified: (Criminal Justice & Corrections) Myrle Carner, Crime Stoppers (pro); Diana Russell, Crime Stoppers (pro); Shawn DeBoer, Crime Stoppers (pro); and Ron Conlin, Crime Stoppers (pro).

(Appropriations) Representative Delvin, prime sponsor; and Ron Conlin and Myrle Canner, Crime Stoppers.