

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SHB 1392

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Law & Justice, April 1, 1997
Ways & Means, April 4, 1997

Title: An act relating to the crime victims' compensation program.

Brief Description: Enhancing crime victims' compensation.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Ballasiotes, Costa, Radcliff, O'Brien, Kessler, Blalock, Cody, Murray, Cole, Morris, Tokuda, Conway, Skinner, Johnson, Linville, Scott, Keiser, Cooper, Gombosky, Ogden and Anderson).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 3/24/97, 4/1/97 [DPA-WM].
Ways & Means: 4/4/97 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.
Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Johnson, Vice Chair; Fairley, Long, Stevens and Zarelli.

Staff: Dick Armstrong (786-7460)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.
Signed by Senators West, Chair; Deccio, Vice Chair; Strannigan, Vice Chair; Bauer, Brown, Fraser, Hochstatter, Kohl, Long, Loveland, McDonald, Rossi, Schow, Snyder, Spanel, Swecker, Thibaudeau and Winsley.

Staff: Maura Sullivan (786-7431)

Background: The Crime Victims Act of 1973 established Washington's Crime Victims' Compensation Program (CVCP) to provide benefits to innocent victims of criminal acts. The Department of Labor and Industries administers the program and benefits available to crime victims are based on benefits paid to injured workers under the Industrial Insurance Act.

Under the Public Records Act, numerous records relating to personal privacy or vital governmental interests are sealed from public inspection and copying. It is unclear, however, whether this provision applies to records relating to appeals of crime victims' compensation claims.

A representative of a claimant may have access to the claimant's file; however, a claimant may not have access to his or her own file.

Summary of Amended Bill: Records relating to appeals of crime victims' compensation claims are exempt from the public inspection and copying requirements in the Public Records Act.

Claimants may have access to the information in their own files.

Ways & Means Amended Bill Compared to Law & Justice Amended Bill: An additional section added to the bill by the Law & Justice Committee which allows unspent money in the crime victims' program to be carried forward to the next biennium is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Appeals of crime victim compensation claims should not be open for public inspection because victims should be entitled to privacy and not be revictimized. In addition, claimants should be able to look at their own files. Also, it would be helpful if unspent appropriations in the crime victims' fund were carried over— into the next biennium. This would help victims to get their money.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Representative Ballasiotes; Representative Costa.