

5047

Sponsor(s): Senators Benton and Zarelli

Brief Title: Arming community corrections officers.

SB 5047 - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS PASSED LEGISLATURE)

Authorizes community corrections officers to carry firearms during the course of their official field duties.

Declares that the department is not responsible for providing or paying for firearms, materials, equipment, or training associated with implementation of this policy.

Declares that nothing in this act makes community corrections officers eligible for membership in the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system under chapter 41.26 RCW.

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 5047

April 24, 1997

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Senate Bill No. 5047 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to arming community corrections officers;"

Senate Bill 5047 would have allowed community corrections officers to carry firearms during the course of their official field duties. The bill provides that the Department of Corrections is not responsible for providing or paying for any training related to firearms use, but does require that the Criminal Justice Training Commission set training and other standards.

I understand the personal safety concerns of the individual community corrections officers. I believe that the Department of Corrections and the officers should arrive at some agreement specifying the circumstances whereby individuals could carry firearms under rules established by the department. Such an agreement should also provide for the necessary training and equipment for the community corrections officers.

SB 5047, however, would create major liability issues for the state without these protections.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Senate Bill No. 5047 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor