

6002-S2

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Long, Hargrove and Oke)

Brief Title: Supervising mentally ill offenders.

SB 6002-S2 - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Declares an intent of the legislature to create a pilot program to provide for postrelease mental health care and housing for a select group of mentally ill offenders entering community living, in order to reduce incarceration costs, increase public safety, and enhance the offender's quality of life.

Requires the secretary to select and contract with a regional support network to provide specialized access and services to mentally ill offenders upon release from total confinement within the department of corrections who have been identified by the department of corrections and selected by the regional support network as high-priority clients for services and who meet service program entrance criteria. The program shall enroll no more than twenty-five offenders at any one time, but shall seek to fill any vacancies that occur.

Directs the department of social and health services, in collaboration with the department of corrections and the regional support network, to track outcomes and submit to the legislature a report of services and outcomes by December 1, 1998, and annually thereafter.

Provides that the act shall be null and void if appropriations are not approved.

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 6002-S2

May 13, 1997

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

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to section 3, Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 6002 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to supervision of mentally ill offenders;"

This legislation establishes a pilot program to provide specialized access and follow up care to mentally ill offenders after they are released from confinement. Under this program, the offenders will get help finding employment, housing and treatment services. I believe this type of program will serve the public well by insuring that mentally ill offenders get the help they need to successfully reintegrate into the community.

Section 3 would require that the state "shall indemnify and hold harmless the regional support network, private provider, and any mental health provider, housing facility or other mental health provider from all claims or suits arising in any manner from acts committed by an enrolled offender during his or her period of enrollment." As drafted, section 3 would expose the state to an

undue risk of liability. To address concerns that program enrollees may present special liability risks for service providers, the Department of Social and Health Services shall consider all reasonable and appropriate means to help limit service provider exposure to liability.

For this reason, I have vetoed section 3 of Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 6002.

With the exception of section 3, I am approving Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 6002.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor