

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6117

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Education, January 26, 2000

Title: An act relating to interference with school activities.

Brief Description: Increasing penalties for persons who interfere with school activities.

Sponsors: Senators McCaslin and Winsley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 1/20/2000, 1/26/2000 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6117 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Bauer, Benton, Brown, Finkbeiner, Goings, Hochstatter, Rasmussen and Swecker.

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: Under current law, it is a gross misdemeanor to interfere by force or violence with school personnel, students, or those under contract with schools or school districts while in the performance of their duties or studies. It is also a gross misdemeanor to intimidate by threat of force or violence school personnel or students while in the performance of their duties or studies. Upon conviction, offenders are subject to a fine of not more than \$500 and/or imprisonment in jail for not more than six months.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Interference with Sports Officials. It is a gross misdemeanor to interfere by force or violence with certified sports officials in the course of their duties.

If the offender is a student at an interscholastic activity, the student may be excluded from participating in or attending that activity for up to one year.

If the offender is not a student, the offender may not enter the school where the crime was committed or attend the interscholastic activity in which the crime was committed for up to one year.

Intimidating School Officials. It remains a gross misdemeanor to intimidate by threat of force or violence school personnel or students while in the performance of their duties or studies.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Sports officials were added to the list of protected individuals under the act. The class C felony for interference with school personnel and students was reduced to a gross misdemeanor.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Violence against school sports officials is a growing problem. Penalties need to be increased to address this problem.

Testimony Against: The bill is too broad and severe. Current law already addresses the problem.

Testified: PRO: John Olson, WA Interscholastic Activities; Bob West, NASO/Referee; Randy Dorn, PSE; Karen Davis, WEA; CON: Jennifer Shaw, WA Assn. of Criminal Defense Lawyers, WA Defenders Assn.