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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6137**

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**State of Washington**

**56th Legislature**

**2000 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Senators Kline, Fraser, Kohl-Welles, Prentice, Fairley and Thibaudeau)

Read first time 02/04/2000.

1 AN ACT Relating to the death penalty; adding a new section to  
2 chapter 10.95 RCW; making appropriations; and providing an expiration  
3 date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 10.95 RCW  
6 to read as follows:

7 (1) A death penalty task force is hereby created for the purpose of  
8 conducting a review of the existing statutes and court rules to  
9 determine the following:

10 (a) The adequacy of the counsel and resources provided defendants  
11 in capital offense cases;

12 (b) The uniformity of decision making by prosecuting attorneys in  
13 terms of charging defendants with aggravated first degree murder and  
14 the criteria in such decisions;

15 (c) The impact of race, ethnicity, gender, and economic status on  
16 the likelihood of a defendant being charged with aggravated first  
17 degree murder; and

1 (d) Whether there are revisions to existing statutes and court  
2 rules which, if implemented, would decrease the likelihood of an  
3 inappropriate imposition of the death penalty.

4 (2) The task force shall consist of eleven members. The membership  
5 shall be appointed as follows:

6 (a) Two members appointed by the chief justice of the state supreme  
7 court;

8 (b) Two members appointed by the president of the senate;

9 (c) Two members appointed by the co-speakers of the house;

10 (d) Two members appointed by the governor;

11 (e) Three members appointed by the president of the Washington  
12 state bar association. Not more than one member shall be a current or  
13 former prosecuting attorney. Not more than one member shall be an  
14 attorney whose practice is primarily criminal defense and who has  
15 experience in death penalty cases.

16 (3) The task force may conduct meetings, select officers, and  
17 prescribe rules of procedure. The task force shall cooperate, act, and  
18 function with legislative committees and executive agencies as  
19 necessary to complete its business.

20 (4) Members of the task force shall serve without additional  
21 compensation, but must be reimbursed for their travel expenses, in  
22 accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 44.04.120, incurred while attending  
23 meetings of the task force, engaged on other task force business  
24 authorized by the task force, or going to and coming from task force  
25 meetings.

26 (5) The task force shall make a report, together with any  
27 recommendations, to the legislature, governor, and supreme court not  
28 later than January 1, 2002.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The sum of fifty thousand dollars, or as  
30 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year  
31 ending June 30, 2000, from the general fund to the office of the  
32 administrator for the courts for the purposes of providing staffing and  
33 support to the death penalty task force.

34 (2) The sum of one hundred thousand dollars, or as much thereof as  
35 may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30,  
36 2001, from the general fund to the office of the administrator for the  
37 courts for the purposes of providing staffing and support to the death  
38 penalty task force.

1      NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**    Section 1 of this act expires July 1, 2002.

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