

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2454

As Reported by House Committee On:
Juvenile Justice & Family Law

Title: An act relating to a study by the institute for public policy to create a system to encourage investment in proven intervention and prevention programs for at-risk youth.

Brief Description: Studying programs for at-risk youth intervention.

Sponsors: Representatives Dickerson, Esser, Jarrett, Darneille, Tokuda and Haigh.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Juvenile Justice & Family Law: 1/23/02, 2/5/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to conduct research and recommend criteria, processes, and institutional arrangements to allow best-practices to be state-certified; to estimate reductions in state justice system caseloads; and to estimate cost-savings for intervention and prevention programs for youth at high risk for involvement with the juvenile or adult justice systems.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE & FAMILY LAW

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Dickerson, Chair; Darneille, Vice Chair; Delvin, Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Carrell, Eickmeyer and Tokuda.

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

The Washington Legislature created the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) in 1983. The board of directors, which governs WSIPP and guides the development of all activities, consists of representatives from the Legislature, the governor's office and public universities.

The WSIPP's mission is to carry out practical, non-partisan research - at legislative direction - on issues of importance to Washington. The WSIPP conducts research activities using its own policy analysts and economists, specialists from universities, and consultants.

The WSIPP published *The Comparative Costs and Benefits of Programs to Reduce Crime* in May 2001. The report focused on the economics of various programs designed to reduce criminal behavior in adults and juveniles. The approach was similar to that of a financial analysis performed by an investment advisor to study the rates of return on various investment options. The study found that Washington has some good investment options as well as some bad investment options. The study also found that a program that can achieve even a relatively small reduction in crime can be cost-beneficial. The WSIPP recommended that programs that work should be evaluated. Finally, the study recommended a portfolio approach in allocating prevention and intervention moneys.

Summary of Bill:

The WSIPP is directed to conduct research necessary to develop and make recommendations to the Legislature regarding the criteria, processes and institutional arrangements needed to:

- (1) State-certify proven best practices in intervention and prevention programs focused on youth at risk for involvement in the adult or juvenile justice systems;
- (2) estimate any resulting reductions in the state justice system caseloads; and
- (3) estimate the unit cost and the total cost savings for the intervention and prevention programs.

The findings and recommendations must be reported to the Legislature by December 15, 2002.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on April 1, 2002.

Testimony For: There are proven prevention and intervention programs being implemented at various levels of government and by various entities. However, the benefits of these programs are not always confined to the particular entity implementing the program. In fact, a successful program at the city or county level can have significant benefits at the state level and vice versa. Currently, there is no way to measure these kinds of cost-benefits. Moreover, with limited resources, it is critical to

focus the money on proven programs. This study builds on prior WSIPP studies and develops the tools to focus on outcomes across the board and to assist in identifying the intervention and prevention programs that are successful with youth at risk for becoming involved in the juvenile and/or adult justice systems.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Dickerson, prime sponsor; Representative Esser; Judge Jim Street, Reinvesting in Youth; Seth Dawson, Washington State Association for Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention; and Mike Doherty, Clallam County.