

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 5270

C 153 L 01
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Modifying requirements for certain victims of sexually violent predators to be eligible for victims' compensation.

Sponsors: Senators Costa, Long, Gardner, Carlson and Kohl-Welles.

Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections
House Committee on Criminal Justice & Corrections

Background: Washington State provides victims' compensation benefits to victims of violent crimes. Under the current statute, the victim must generally file a police report within 12 months of the criminal act and apply for benefits within two years after the police report was filed. The program director may make a "good cause" exception for up to five years.

Victims of persons being held on sexually violent predator petitions may be retraumatized when notified of the civil commitment proceedings or when they are interviewed, deposed, or asked to testify against their offender. Civil commitment proceedings usually occur long after the right to file a victims' compensation claim occurs and after the program director's ability to make a good cause exception has expired. These victims are not currently eligible for benefits under the victims' compensation statute for their current trauma.

Summary: Victims of persons against whom the state is proceeding under the civil commitment for sexually violent predators statute are eligible for victims' compensation benefits. The right to benefits under this provision accrues when the victim is notified of the proceedings, or is interviewed, deposed, or testifies in proceedings under Chapter 71.09 RCW. The victim must apply for benefits within two years after the right to benefits accrues. Benefits under this provision are limited to compensation for losses or costs incurred after the right to benefits under this provision accrues. The director of the victims' compensation program may make "good cause" extensions of the time for application for five years after the right to benefits accrues.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46 0
House	94 0

Effective: July 22, 2001