

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6240

As Passed Senate, February 14, 2002

Title: An act relating to notice to felons regarding restoration of voting rights.

Brief Description: Clarifying the procedure for providing offenders with a certificate of discharge.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Franklin, Shin, Kline, Regala, Prentice and Costa).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 1/23/02, 2/6/02 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 2/14/02, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6240 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Costa, Vice Chair; Carlson, Franklin, Hewitt, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Long and Stevens.

Staff: Tony Rugel (786-7754)

Background: Concerns have been raised that offenders who have completed all the requirements of their sentence and parole may not be aware that they have had the right to vote restored. Currently, the Department of Corrections (DOC) sends notice to the sentencing court when an offender has completed his or her sentence and the court provides the offender with a certificate of discharge restoring their right to vote. In some cases, the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board (ISRB) may independently issue a certificate of discharge to the offender upon completion of the offender's sentence.

This bill is intended to help give notice to offenders that the right to vote has been restored.

Summary of Bill: When a sentencing court receives notice from DOC that an offender has completed all requirements including all legal financial obligations of his or her sentence, the court issues a certificate of discharge to the offender either in person or by mail. DOC only sends notice to the sentencing court if the offender is under the supervision of the department. The court also sends a copy of the certification to the county's auditor and to DOC. When the ISRB determines that an offender has completed all the requirements of his or her sentence, it also delivers a certification to the offender and sends a copy to the county auditor and DOC. DOC maintains a data base of the certificates of discharge.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The bill encourages people to actively participate in society and American culture and supports the payment of all legal financial obligations.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Jerry Lee, Jr. (pro); Jim Thatcher, Dept. of Corrections (pro w/concerns); Janis Martin, Safe Homes (pro).