

SSB 6255 - H COMM AMD  
By Committee on Appropriations

ADOPTED AS AMENDED 03/03/04

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the  
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that criminal history  
4 record information background checks for employment purposes are  
5 rapidly increasing in Washington state. While the demand for criminal  
6 history record information background checks is growing, the existing  
7 criminal history record information background check data transmission  
8 infrastructure and processes are not adequate to keep pace with the  
9 growing demand. Furthermore, employers are concerned with the current  
10 system's ability to quickly secure results. Without adequate data  
11 transmission infrastructure and processes to encourage efficient  
12 criminal history record information background checks and to receive  
13 results quickly, a public safety risk is created. This is especially  
14 true when new or prospective employees will be working with children.

15 The legislature has learned that some states have recently  
16 developed comprehensive criminal history record information background  
17 check programs. These programs focus on making criminal history record  
18 information background checks easily accessible to employers and  
19 prospective employees and have eliminated long response times.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) A joint task force on criminal  
21 background check processes is established. The joint task force shall  
22 consist of the following members:

23 (a) One member from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate,  
24 appointed by the president of the senate;

25 (b) One member from each of the two largest caucuses of the house  
26 of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of  
27 representatives;

28 (c) The chief of the Washington state patrol, or the chief's  
29 designee;

1 (d) The secretary of the department of social and health services,  
2 or the secretary's designee;

3 (e) The state superintendent of public instruction, or the  
4 superintendent's designee;

5 (f) An elected sheriff or police chief, selected by the Washington  
6 association of sheriffs and police chiefs; and

7 (g) The following seven members, jointly appointed by the speaker  
8 of the house of representatives and the president of the senate:

9 (i) A representative from a nonprofit service organization that  
10 serves primarily children under sixteen years of age;

11 (ii) A health care provider as defined in RCW 7.70.020;

12 (iii) A representative from a business or organization that serves  
13 primarily developmentally disabled persons or vulnerable adults;

14 (iv) A representative from a local youth athletic association;

15 (v) A representative from the insurance industry; and

16 (vi) Two representatives from a local parks and recreation program;  
17 one member shall be selected by the association of Washington cities  
18 and one member shall be selected by the Washington association of  
19 counties.

20 (2) The task force shall choose two cochairs from among its  
21 membership.

22 (3) The task force shall review and make recommendations to the  
23 legislature and the governor regarding criminal background check policy  
24 in Washington state. In preparing the recommendations, the committee  
25 shall, at a minimum, review the following issues:

26 (a) What state and federal statutes require regarding criminal  
27 background checks, and determine whether any changes should be made;

28 (b) What criminal offenses are currently reportable through the  
29 criminal background check program, and determine whether any changes  
30 should be made;

31 (c) What information is available through the Washington state  
32 patrol and the federal bureau of investigation criminal background  
33 check systems, and determine whether any changes should be made;

34 (d) What are the best practices among organizations for obtaining  
35 criminal background checks on their employees and volunteers;

36 (e) What is the feasibility and costs for businesses and  
37 organizations to do periodic background checks;

38 (f) What is the feasibility of requiring all businesses and  
39 organizations, including nonprofit entities, to conduct criminal

1 background checks for all employees, contractors, agents, and  
2 volunteers who have regularly scheduled supervised or unsupervised  
3 access to children, developmentally disabled persons, or vulnerable  
4 adults; and

5 (g) A review of the benefits and obstacles of implementing a  
6 criminal history record information background check program created by  
7 the national child protection act of 1993. The national child  
8 protection act of 1993 increases the availability of criminal history  
9 record information background checks for employers who have employees  
10 or volunteers who work with children, elderly persons, or persons with  
11 disabilities.

12 (4) The task force, where feasible, may consult with individuals  
13 from the public and private sector.

14 (5) The task force shall use legislative facilities and staff from  
15 senate committee services and the house office of program research.

16 (6) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations to  
17 the legislature by December 31, 2004.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) In consultation with the Washington  
19 state patrol, the Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs  
20 shall conduct a study on criminal history record information background  
21 check technology and systems. The study shall focus on how, through  
22 the use of modern technology, Washington state can reduce delays in the  
23 criminal history record information background check processing time  
24 and how Washington state can make criminal history record information  
25 background checks more accessible and efficient.

26 (2) The study shall include, but is not limited to:

27 (a) A review and analysis of the criminal history record  
28 information background check technology systems in states that have  
29 recently implemented or are soon to implement comprehensive criminal  
30 history record information background check programs;

31 (b) Recommendations on how a comprehensive criminal history record  
32 information background check program should be designed in Washington  
33 state, and how much a comprehensive program would cost to implement in  
34 Washington state;

35 (c) A review of how a comprehensive criminal history record  
36 information background check program could be paid for in Washington  
37 state, which includes a determination on whether the program could be  
38 funded solely by user fees.

1           (3) The findings and recommendations from the Washington  
2 association of sheriffs and police chiefs shall be presented to the  
3 joint task force on criminal background check processes no later than  
4 November 30, 2004.

5           (4) The requirement to perform the study under this section and to  
6 make findings and recommendations is subject to availability of funds  
7 appropriated for this specific purpose.

8           NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 4.** This act expires January 31, 2005."

9           Correct the title.

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