

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1028

As Passed House:

February 14, 2003

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: By House Committee on Juvenile Justice & Family Law (originally sponsored by Representatives Dickerson, Delvin, Kagi, O'Brien, Kenney and Upthegrove).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Juvenile Justice & Family Law: 1/23/03, 1/30/03 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/14/03, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

· Directs the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to conduct research and recommend to the Legislature criteria, processes, and institutional arrangements so that best practices could be identified and reductions in the justice system caseloads and cost savings could be estimated.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE & FAMILY LAW

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Dickerson, Chair; Pettigrew, Vice Chair; Delvin, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Eickmeyer, Hinkle and Upthegrove.

Staff: Trudes Hutcheson (786-7384).

Background:

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) is a research organization created by the Legislature to provide nonpartisan research at legislative direction on issues of importance to Washington.

In May 2001 the WSIPP published its report, The Comparative Costs and Benefits of Programs to Reduce Crime, which focused on the economics of various nationwide programs designed to reduce criminal behavior in adults and juveniles. The WSIPP research found, among other things, that: (a) certain programs, especially those designed for juvenile offenders, can improve the effectiveness of Washington's criminal justice system; (b) some programs studied do not lower criminality and have negative economic bottom lines; and (c) evaluations of the programs are necessary to determine if outcomes are being achieved in a cost-beneficial manner. The report did not address what changes were needed for the state to implement best practices or how to forecast caseloads, crime reduction, or savings as a result of implementing the programs.

Summary of Substitute 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) identify proven best practices in intervention and prevention programs focused on youth at risk for involvement in the adult and 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, 2003.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 15, 2003.

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

Testimony For: This bill will help put resources where it is needed in cost-effective programs. It is budget-neutral. The bill does not require the state to go after money in other programs. The goal is to increase the money available in the juvenile justice system. The study will help us identify how to capture resources and reinvest those resources in the same prevention programs that were successful in saving money.

(With concerns) The terms "high risk," "prevention" and "intervention" are code words

for psychiatric screening of kids, and could result in the unwanted psychiatric treatment and medication of kids.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Representative Dickerson, prime sponsor; Representative Jarrett; Norm Maleng, King County Prosecutor; and Jim Street, Director, Reinvesting in Youth.

(With concerns) Richard Warner, Citizen Commission on Human Rights.