

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1711

As Reported by House Committee On:
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to the municipal criminal justice assistance account.

Brief Description: Revising method for making distributions under the municipal criminal justice assistance account.

Sponsors: Representatives O'Brien, Mielke and Darneille; by request of Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/19/03, 2/20/03 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Reformulates the allocation process for the portion of the Municipal Criminal Justice Assistance Account funding distributed by the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (DCTED).
- Eliminates the application requirement for this portion of the funding distribution.
- Eliminates the requirement that the DCTED create a temporary advisory committee to adopt criteria for funding allocation.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Sehlin, Ranking Minority Member; Pearson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Buck, Clements, Cody, Conway, Cox, Dunshee, Grant, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Linville, McDonald, McIntire, Miloscia, Pflug, Ruderman, Schual-Berke, Sump and Talcott.

Staff: Holly Lynde (786-7153).

Background:

Beginning in FY 2000, the Legislature established a \$4.6 million transfer from the General Fund-State to the Municipal Criminal Justice Assistance Account to support local governments' essential public safety functions. The State Treasurer distributes 36 percent of this funding on a per capita basis for criminal justice purposes. The Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (DCTED) distributes the remaining 64 percent and develops the formula and application process under which the funding is allocated.

In 2001, 220 cities and towns applied for the funding that is distributed through the DCTED. Funding is distributed to qualified applicants based on the following criteria:

- 14 percent to cities that have initiated innovative law enforcement strategies;
- 20 percent to cities that have initiated programs to help at-risk children or child abuse victim response programs;
- 20 percent to cities that have initiated programs to reduce the level of domestic violence within their jurisdictions or to provide counseling to domestic violence victims; and
- 10 percent to cities that contract with another governmental agency for a majority of the city's law enforcement services.

If a city or town is found to be using its share of funding for purposes other than for which it was intended, the money must be repaid or the noncomplying use of the funding must be satisfactorily justified. However, if a city or town adequately demonstrates hardship or other emergent need, the Director of the DCTED may authorize the use of the funding for noncomplying purposes.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The methodology by which the DCTED distributes its portion of the Municipal Criminal Justice Assistance Account funding is modified. Funding will be distributed as follows:

- 10 percent on a per capita basis to cities that contract with another governmental agency for the majority of the city's law enforcement services. A city or town must notify the DCTED by letter if it qualifies for this distribution; and
- 54 percent on a per capita basis to cities and towns that initiate innovative law enforcement strategies, create programs to assist at-risk children or child abuse victim response programs, and create programs designed to reduce the level of domestic violence or to provide counseling for domestic violence victims.

The Director of the DCTED may no longer authorize noncomplying uses of the funds. Additionally, the DCTED is no longer required to adopt allocation criteria, nor is it required to create a temporary committee to provide advice on developing the criteria.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill removes a duplicative reference to allocation criteria.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill is an effort to simplify or eliminate the application process to save money for all those involved. This is not a request for new money but rather an effort to make distribution of funds automatic. This bill streamlines the process to get more money where it should be.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative O'Brien, prime sponsor; Tami Fellin, Association of Washington Cities; and Tom McBride, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.