

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6300

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Judiciary, January 30, 2004

**Title:** An act relating to reimbursement to counties for extraordinary criminal justice costs.

**Brief Description:** Revising criteria for reimbursement to counties for extraordinary criminal justice costs.

**Sponsors:** Senators Doumit, Roach and Mulliken.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Judiciary: 1/28/04, 1/30/04 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6300 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chair; Esser, Vice Chair; Brandland, Hargrove, Haugen, Johnson, Kline and Roach.

**Staff:** Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

**Background:** Counties may submit a petition, to the Office of Public Defense, for funding to reimburse the county for extraordinary criminal justice costs. These costs are defined as all of the costs associated with aggravated murder cases. The Office of Public Defense consults with the Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys and the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs to process the petitions and prioritize them. The prioritized list is then submitted to the Legislature's fiscal committees.

In 2003, King, Kitsap, Snohomish, and Spokane counties submitted petitions. King County received \$766,000 for extraordinary criminal justice costs (King County's request was for \$10,491,430). Kitsap, Snohomish, and Spokane counties did not receive any funding for this purpose.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Counties may petition for extraordinary criminal justice costs incurred for any homicide cases, not just cases involving aggravated murder. Petitions are only appropriate if the cases have an extraordinary and disproportionate impact on the prior or current county budget.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** It is clarified that only petitions for homicide cases that have an extraordinary and disproportionate impact on the county's budget should be submitted.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** Rural counties have a difficult time finding the resources to prosecute serious homicide cases. Counties are unable to control costs when the judge orders costs to be paid. Criminal justice costs are going up, but criminal justice funding is being reduced.

There is concern the Office of Public Defense may have difficulty dealing with the anticipated volume of petitions.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Senator Doumit, prime sponsor; Joanne Moore, Office of Public Defense; Commissioner Pat Hamilton, Pacific County; Sheriff John Didion, Pacific County; Beth Goldberg, King County.