

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6352

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Children & Family Services & Corrections, February 3, 2004

Title: An act relating to selection of telephone calling systems for inmates in state correctional facilities.

Brief Description: Revising provisions concerning selection of telephone calling systems for inmates in state correctional facilities.

Sponsors: Senators Stevens, Hargrove, Esser, Schmidt, Poulsen, Berkey, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Children & Family Services & Corrections: 1/27/04, 2/3/04 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6352 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Stevens, Chair; Parlette, Vice Chair; Carlson, Deccio, Hargrove, McAuliffe and Regala.

Staff: Lilah Amos (786-7429)

Background: The Department of Corrections (DOC) is authorized to intercept and record telephone calls from an offender or resident of a state correctional facility. The statute requires that these calls be collect calls with operator announcement to the call receiver that the call is coming from a prison resident and that it may be monitored and recorded.

With the development of calling cards and three-way calling capability, concern exists that offenders are able to make calls circumventing these requirements. Technology exists which would eliminate this problem and would make the calls more secure and less expensive to inmate families, but this improved technology cannot be used with the current outdated equipment in place at DOC facilities.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Department of Corrections is authorized to approve a new calling system which is at least as secure as the previous system. The requirement that offenders make only "collect" calls is removed. Provisions requiring the department to be able to monitor calls and make operator announcements remain in effect.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The personal calling system for offenders needs to be updated. New technology is increasingly available and can provide lower-cost options to families than the collect calling system currently mandated by statute.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: James LeBoeuf, Evercom, Inc.; Phil Apanovitch, Inmate Calling Solutions; Howard Tharp, AT&T Bob Dubay, Qwest; Eldon Vail, DOC.