

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1160

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, March 31, 2005

Title: An act relating to reducing workplace violence in state hospitals.

Brief Description: Reducing workplace violence in state hospitals.

Sponsors: Representatives Conway, Wood, Green, Hudgins, McCoy, Lovick, Darneille, Morrell, Chase, Cody, Kenney and Sells.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/28/05, 85-0.

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 3/24/05, 3/31/05 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Stevens, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Carrell, McAuliffe and Thibaudeau.

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: Department of Labor and Industries data from 1995 to 2000 shows that social services and health services accounted for over 50 percent of assault or violence-related claims in the workplace.

Legislation enacted in 2000 required state mental hospitals to take certain actions related to protecting employees from workplace violence. In particular, state hospitals were required to: develop and implement plans to protect employees from workplace violence; provide violence prevention training; and keep records of violent acts committed against employees or patients at the hospitals.

In addition, the Department of Social and Health Services was required to report annually to the legislature on its efforts to reduce workplace violence. Legislation enacted in 2003 repealed this reporting requirement.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Social and Health Services must report its efforts to reduce workplace violence in the state hospitals for care of the mentally ill by September 1 of each year. The report must be made to the House Committee on Commerce and Labor and the Senate Committee on Commerce and Trade.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: State operated hospitals are some of the most violent workplaces. Incidents of violence are increasing. Washington State hospitals have an unacceptable level of attacks upon employees. Restoring these annual reports will go a long way in protecting workers and keeping the attention on safety.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Representative Conway, prime sponsor; Carol Dotlich, Washington Federation of State Employees.