

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6685

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, February 1, 2006

Title: An act relating to establishing a council on mentally ill offenders.

Brief Description: Establishing a council on mentally ill offenders.

Sponsors: Senators Regala, Brandland, Delvin, Rasmussen and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 1/30/06, 2/1/06 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6685 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Indu Thomas (786-7459)

Background: Currently, a group of judges, law enforcement representatives, and treatment providers in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties participate in an informal workgroup. This group meets annually to discuss strategies and interventions to reduce the number of persons with mental disorders who have multiple contacts with the criminal justice system.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Secretary of the Department of Corrections must serve as the chairperson of a statewide workgroup. The membership will include members of the judiciary, representatives of law enforcement agencies, and treatment providers, five of whom must be gubernatorial appointments. None of the members are to receive compensation; however, travel and training expenses are to be reimbursed.

The group must:

- Identify strategies to prevent adults and juveniles with mental disorders from becoming offenders;
- Identify strategies for improving cost-effectiveness of services provided;
- Identify incentives to encourage the use of cost-effective approaches;
- Consider strategies that improve: service coordination, transition back to community treatment programs after time in a correctional facility, and access to prescription medications; and
- Create an electronic medical records program which will permit all levels of corrections to share information concerning health care, treatment and medications.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The director of the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration and a representative of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police

Chiefs are added to the council. This reduces the number of Senate and one House of Representatives appointments to two each. The council is to assist and guide the creation of an electronic medical records program to improve information sharing among correctional facilities.

Appropriation: \$100,000.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: There is no coordination between the different local corrections agencies, the mental health system, and the criminal justice system. An informal council has been meeting to discuss coordination of systems and to improve the delivery of services to mentally ill offenders. This group should be recognized and expanded to address these issues statewide.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Peter Lukovich, Washington State Partners in Crisis; Karen Daniels, Thurston County Jail.