

HB 1651 - DIGEST

Declares that it is and has been the intent of the legislature that information regarding sex offenders be shared between state agencies and with local law enforcement, and that public disclosure of sex offender information that is accurate, relevant, and necessary to protect the public be managed by and controlled through the community notification statute, RCW 4.24.550.

Finds that law enforcement has been, and continues to be, the most reliable means of ensuring that the information released protects the public, protects the confidentiality of victims, protects ongoing criminal investigations, and complies with the confidentiality provisions of other federal and state laws.

Finds that to accomplish its penological duties, the department of corrections must receive and use protected information to appropriately confine, supervise, treat, and assess the risk of offenders. To further this intent, the legislature has authorized the end of sentence review committee to access and consider information that otherwise may be confidential for the specific reason of determining if the offender should be referred for civil commitment as a sexually violent predator under chapter 71.09 RCW.

Finds that it is appropriate for the department to share information, beyond what is publicly disclosable, with law enforcement agencies for the appropriate supervision of offenders in the community or for the investigation of criminal acts.

Does not intend that law enforcement bulletins or notes, comments, and assessments of the end of sentence review committee to assess the risk, or plan the transition of sex offenders to the community, be available for public inspection through public disclosure due to the risk that providing the information in such a manner would pose to the state's community notification program and the risk that the information would unnecessarily traumatize the victims of the offenders' previous offenses.