

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5987

C 389 L 07

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Convening a work group to evaluate gang-related crime.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Senators Clements, Carrell, Marr, Holmquist, Schoesler and Rasmussen; by request of Attorney General).

Senate Committee on Judiciary

House Committee on Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness

Background: Graffiti is considered a gateway crime. It is a crime that is committed by those attempting to gain admission into or promotion within a gang. Currently, graffiti is charged under the category of malicious mischief; the degree depends on the amount of damage caused in dollars.

Malicious mischief in the first degree occurs if the damage exceeds \$1,500. It is a class B felony. Malicious mischief in the second degree occurs if the damage exceeds \$250. It is a class C felony. Malicious mischief in the third degree occurs if the damage equals \$50 or less. It is a gross misdemeanor.

Proponents believe that more serious gang-related offenses will be decreased by focusing on this type of gang-related property crime, usually committed by juveniles just beginning to involve themselves in criminal behavior.

Summary: The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) is directed to establish and convene a work group to evaluate the problem of gang-related crime in Washington State. The workgroup must include one member from each of the two largest caucuses in the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House; one member from each of the two largest caucuses in the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate; and representatives from the following groups, appointed jointly by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate: the Office of the Attorney General, local law enforcement, prosecutors and municipal attorneys, criminal defense attorneys, court administrators, prison or detention administrators and probation officers, and experts in gang or delinquency prevention.

The workgroup must evaluate and make recommendations regarding additional legislative measures to combat gang-related crime, the creation of a statewide gang information database, possible reforms to the juvenile justice system for gang-related juvenile offenses, best practices for prevention and intervention of youth gang membership, and the adoption of legislation authorizing a civil anti-gang injunction. Results of the evaluation must be reported to the Legislature on or before January 1, 2008.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 48 0

House	95	1	(House amended)
Senate	46	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 22, 2007