

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6406

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, February 07, 2008

Title: An act relating to offender education.

Brief Description: Creating a program for offender education.

Sponsors: Senators Franklin, Hargrove, Kohl-Welles, Weinstein, Carrell, Marr, Fairley, Shin, Kauffman, Fraser, Pridemore, Rasmussen, Sheldon, Murray, McAuliffe, McDermott and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 1/25/08, 2/7/08 [DPS-WM, w/oRec].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6406 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Stevens, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Brandland, Marr and McAuliffe.

Staff: Kevin Black (786-7747)

Background: The Department of Corrections (DOC) must offer basic skills education to offenders in custody, in order to assist offenders in obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): As a component of basic academic skills education, DOC must provide offenders who are United States citizens with the opportunity to participate in education about American citizenship and civil rights. This will include topics of responsible citizenship, voting, payment of legal financial obligations, sex offender registry and community notification, civil government participation, and restoration of civil rights, including voting rights and gun rights. DOC must provide offenders, before release into the community, with information regarding community service providers who provide educational services and other assistance programs to offenders.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): Adds an intent section to clarify that civic

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education will be taught in conjunction with the existing basic skills program. Removes require that DOC develop a standard curriculum for community education for offenders after release.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: Bill will give a tool to offenders to help them become good citizens, get a job, and not reoffend. It will create connections to the community, and therefore help community integration. Teaching about civic participation should be mandated in high schools, grade schools, and colleges as well as in the prison system. Section 2 of the bill should be reconsidered because it might impair community service providers' ability to tailor education programs to meet the needs of offenders.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Rosa Franklin, prime sponsor; Kathy Goebel, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges; Dr. Gary Murrell, Grays Harbor College.