

SB 5295-S - DIGEST

(SEE ALSO PROPOSED 2ND SUB)

Declares that the creation of the office of corrections ombudsman is intended to assist in strengthening procedures and practices which lessen the possibility of actions occurring within the department of corrections which may adversely impact the health, safety, and welfare of offenders, and which will effectively reduce the exposure of the department to litigation.

Creates an office of corrections ombudsman within the office of the governor for the purpose of providing information to offenders and their families; promoting public awareness and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of confined offenders; identifying system issues and responses for the governor and the legislature to act upon; and ensuring compliance with relevant statutes, rules, and policies pertaining to corrections facilities, services, and treatment of confined offenders under the jurisdiction of the Washington department of corrections.

Directs the ombudsman to report directly to the governor and shall exercise his or her powers and duties independently of the secretary of the department of corrections.