

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2422

As of February 19, 2010

Title: An act relating to escape or disappearance notification requirements.

Brief Description: Changing escape or disappearance notice requirements.

Sponsors: House Committee on Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness (originally sponsored by Representatives Parker, Hurst, Driscoll, Kelley, Dammeier, Schmick and Ormsby).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/03/10, 96-0.

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 2/18/10.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Staff: Kevin Black (786-7747)

Background: A person may be committed to a state hospital for treatment under chapter 10.77 RCW pursuant to a finding that the person is incompetent to stand trial for a criminal offense, pursuant to an adjudication that the person is not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI), or pursuant to an order for an evaluation to determine whether a person should be found incompetent to stand trial or NGRI. When such a person escapes from the state hospital, or from conditional release, the superintendent of the state hospital, or community corrections officer in the case of an escape from supervision on conditional release, must notify local law enforcement officers, other governmental agencies, the person's relatives, and any other appropriate persons in order to protect public safety and secure apprehension of the person. If the person was committed pursuant to a sex, violent, or felony harassment offense, the superintendent must additionally notify local law enforcement in the county in which the person resided immediately prior to the person's arrest, and any witnesses, crime victims, or survivors who have requested notification.

Summary of Bill: State law enforcement is added to the list of agencies who must be notified by the superintendent of a state facility in the case of the escape of a person committed under chapter 10.77 RCW. The superintendent must provide notice to witnesses or crime victims who have requested notification without regard to whether the person was committed pursuant to a sex, violent, or felony harassment offense. The superintendent, and not a community corrections officer, is responsible for providing notice in the case of an escape from supervision on conditional release.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Information regarding persons who have requested notifications regarding a person committed under chapter 10.77 RCW are declared confidential and must not be provided to the committed person.

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: PRO: This bill would have made a tremendous difference in trying to track down the patient who escaped from Eastern State Hospital. It provides coordination and emphasizes notification.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Parker, prime sponsor.