

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5933

As Reported by House Committee On: Public Safety

Title: An act relating to establishing a statewide training program on human trafficking laws for criminal justice personnel.

Brief Description: Establishing a statewide training program on human trafficking laws for criminal justice personnel.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators O'Ban, Kohl-Welles, Miloscia, Fraser, Fain, Padden, Hasegawa, Litzow, Dammeier, Chase and Conway).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Public Safety: 3/20/15, 3/26/15 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy to establish a statewide training program on human trafficking laws for criminal justice personnel and to provide a biennial report to the Legislature on the program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Goodman, Chair; Orwall, Vice Chair; Klippert, Ranking Minority Member; Hayes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Griffey, Moscoso, Pettigrew and Wilson.

Staff: Cassie Jones (786-7303).

Background:

The Office of Crime Victims Advocacy (OCVA) is a program of the Department of Commerce, which performs the following functions:

- advocates on behalf of victims obtaining needed services and resources;
- administers grant funding for community programs working with victims of crimes;
- assists communities in planning and implementing services for crime victims; and

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.

- advises local and state government agencies of practices, policies, and priorities which impact crime victims.

The OCVA administers grant funding to community agencies providing services to human trafficking victims. The OCVA defines human trafficking as occurring when a person uses violence, deception, or threats to force or coerce another person to provide labor or commercial sex, and to prevent that person from leaving the situation. It also occurs when a person recruits, harbors, transports, provides, or obtains another person knowing that force, fraud, or coercion will be used to exploit the other person for labor or commercial sex. Travel is not always involved.

Summary of Bill:

The OCVA must establish a statewide training program on human trafficking laws for criminal justice personnel. The training must be provided where possible by an entity that has experience in developing coalitions, training, programs, and policy on human trafficking. The entity will provide or coordinate training for law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, and court personnel covering state anti-trafficking laws and sex trafficking investigations and adjudications. The training must encourage interdisciplinary coordination among criminal justice personnel, build cultural competency, and develop understanding of diverse victim populations. The OCVA must provide a biennial report to the Legislature on the statewide training program, with a focus on the effectiveness of the training.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The residual effects of human trafficking take a great deal of time to heal. Victims of human trafficking will likely encounter law enforcement numerous times. If those officers are trained in identifying the signs of human trafficking then further harm to those victims can be avoided. There are patrol officers and judges who are not being trained on the new human trafficking laws and as a result the laws are not being enforced.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Jeri Moomaw, Washington Engage.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.