

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5178

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Human Services, Mental Health & Housing, January 22, 2015

Title: An act relating to the criminal justice treatment account.

Brief Description: Concerning the criminal justice treatment account.

Sponsors: Senators O'Ban and Darneille; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services, Mental Health & Housing: 1/20/15, 1/22/15 [DP-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, MENTAL HEALTH & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators O'Ban, Chair; Miloscia, Vice Chair; Darneille, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove and Padden.

Staff: Kevin Black (786-7747)

Background: The criminal justice treatment account (CJTA) provides funding for substance abuse treatment and treatment support services for (1) offenders with substance abuse problems who are charged with criminal offenses; (2) treatment services for nonviolent offenders within a drug court program; and (3) administrative and overhead costs of drug court.

CJTA funds may not be spent on housing other than that provided as part of an inpatient substance abuse treatment program, vocational training, or mental health counseling.

Funding for the CJTA comes from amounts transferred from the state general fund. The appropriation amount increases every fiscal year according to the federal inflation rate.

After a 3 percent withholding for administrative expenses, the Department of Social and Health Services must distribute 70 percent of appropriated amounts under the CJTA directly to counties and 30 percent must be used to fund statewide grants for the purposes of treating offenders who have been charged by a prosecuting attorney.

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.

Summary of Bill: Permitted uses of CJTA funds are expanded beginning April 1, 2016, to include peer support, supported housing, supported employment, crisis diversion, recovery support services, vocational training, mental health counseling, and to provide state matching funds for federal Medicaid payments.

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: Since November 2013, Medicaid eligibility among the population served by the CJTA has increased from 33 to 76 percent. This is an opportunity to provide more flexible recovery support services, which make a big positive difference in outcomes for drug court participants. As a CJTA panel member, I support this change. This will allow us to use best practices for treatment in the criminal justice system.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Jon Tunheim, Thurston County Prosecutor, WA Assn. of Prosecuting Attorneys; Jane Beyer, Dept. of Social and Health Services; Brad Finegood, King County.