

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6437

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Law & Justice, February 3, 2016

Title: An act relating to detecting and deterring dangerous drone operations near correctional facilities.

Brief Description: Detecting and deterring dangerous drone operations near correctional facilities.

Sponsors: Senators Roach, O'Ban, Schoesler, Warnick, Brown, Honeyford and Benton.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 2/02/16, 2/03/16 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6437 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Padden, Chair; O'Ban, Vice Chair; Pedersen, Ranking Minority Member; Darneille, Frockt, Pearson and Roach.

Staff: Tim Ford (786-7423)

Background: Unmanned aerial vehicles, commonly known as drones, are relatively new, inexpensive, and a ubiquitous technology that have many uses, including research, surveillance, commerce, recreation, public safety, and others. Drones may also be used for nefarious purposes such as the delivery of drugs, weapons, or other contraband to state prison inmates. Contraband is specified by the Department of Corrections policy to include illegal items, explosives, deadly weapons, alcoholic beverages, drugs, tobacco products, controlled substances, and any item that is controlled, limited, or prohibited on the grounds or within the secure perimeter of a correctional facility as defined by Department of Corrections and facility policy. The Department of Corrections may search visitors to state prisons to prevent and control the transfer of contraband.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): The crime of a "dangerous drone operation" is established. A person is guilty of a dangerous drone operation if the person knowingly operates a drone, over or within 1000 feet of the perimeter of a correctional facility, without authorization from the Department of Corrections. A dangerous drone operation is an

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unranked class C felony. The crime of a dangerous drone operation does not apply to drone operations by federal, state, or local governmental agencies.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY LAW & JUSTICE COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): The Department of Corrections is not required to detect and deter drone operations near correctional facilities.

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: Concerns of the Department of Corrections include whether the addition of another security system can be maintained forever. We are not aware of any drones over prisons in WA state.

Persons Testifying on Original Bill: PRO: Steve Sinclair, Department of Corrections.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying on Original Bill: No one.