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SENATE BILL 6554

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State of Washington                      64th Legislature                      2016 Regular Session

By Senators Benton, Pedersen, Padden, Darneille, and Miloscia

Read first time 01/26/16. Referred to Committee on Law & Justice.

1            AN ACT Relating to providing an aggravating circumstance for  
2 assault against a utility worker; and amending RCW 9.94A.535.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4            **Sec. 1.** RCW 9.94A.535 and 2013 2nd sp.s. c 35 s 37 are each  
5 amended to read as follows:

6            The court may impose a sentence outside the standard sentence  
7 range for an offense if it finds, considering the purpose of this  
8 chapter, that there are substantial and compelling reasons justifying  
9 an exceptional sentence. Facts supporting aggravated sentences, other  
10 than the fact of a prior conviction, shall be determined pursuant to  
11 the provisions of RCW 9.94A.537.

12            Whenever a sentence outside the standard sentence range is  
13 imposed, the court shall set forth the reasons for its decision in  
14 written findings of fact and conclusions of law. A sentence outside  
15 the standard sentence range shall be a determinate sentence.

16            If the sentencing court finds that an exceptional sentence  
17 outside the standard sentence range should be imposed, the sentence  
18 is subject to review only as provided for in RCW 9.94A.585(4).

19            A departure from the standards in RCW 9.94A.589 (1) and (2)  
20 governing whether sentences are to be served consecutively or  
21 concurrently is an exceptional sentence subject to the limitations in

1 this section, and may be appealed by the offender or the state as set  
2 forth in RCW 9.94A.585 (2) through (6).

3 (1) Mitigating Circumstances - Court to Consider

4 The court may impose an exceptional sentence below the standard  
5 range if it finds that mitigating circumstances are established by a  
6 preponderance of the evidence. The following are illustrative only  
7 and are not intended to be exclusive reasons for exceptional  
8 sentences.

9 (a) To a significant degree, the victim was an initiator, willing  
10 participant, aggressor, or provoker of the incident.

11 (b) Before detection, the defendant compensated, or made a good  
12 faith effort to compensate, the victim of the criminal conduct for  
13 any damage or injury sustained.

14 (c) The defendant committed the crime under duress, coercion,  
15 threat, or compulsion insufficient to constitute a complete defense  
16 but which significantly affected his or her conduct.

17 (d) The defendant, with no apparent predisposition to do so, was  
18 induced by others to participate in the crime.

19 (e) The defendant's capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of  
20 his or her conduct, or to conform his or her conduct to the  
21 requirements of the law, was significantly impaired. Voluntary use of  
22 drugs or alcohol is excluded.

23 (f) The offense was principally accomplished by another person  
24 and the defendant manifested extreme caution or sincere concern for  
25 the safety or well-being of the victim.

26 (g) The operation of the multiple offense policy of RCW 9.94A.589  
27 results in a presumptive sentence that is clearly excessive in light  
28 of the purpose of this chapter, as expressed in RCW 9.94A.010.

29 (h) The defendant or the defendant's children suffered a  
30 continuing pattern of physical or sexual abuse by the victim of the  
31 offense and the offense is a response to that abuse.

32 (i) The defendant was making a good faith effort to obtain or  
33 provide medical assistance for someone who is experiencing a drug-  
34 related overdose.

35 (j) The current offense involved domestic violence, as defined in  
36 RCW 10.99.020, and the defendant suffered a continuing pattern of  
37 coercion, control, or abuse by the victim of the offense and the  
38 offense is a response to that coercion, control, or abuse.

39 (2) Aggravating Circumstances - Considered and Imposed by the  
40 Court

1 The trial court may impose an aggravated exceptional sentence  
2 without a finding of fact by a jury under the following  
3 circumstances:

4 (a) The defendant and the state both stipulate that justice is  
5 best served by the imposition of an exceptional sentence outside the  
6 standard range, and the court finds the exceptional sentence to be  
7 consistent with and in furtherance of the interests of justice and  
8 the purposes of the sentencing reform act.

9 (b) The defendant's prior unscored misdemeanor or prior unscored  
10 foreign criminal history results in a presumptive sentence that is  
11 clearly too lenient in light of the purpose of this chapter, as  
12 expressed in RCW 9.94A.010.

13 (c) The defendant has committed multiple current offenses and the  
14 defendant's high offender score results in some of the current  
15 offenses going unpunished.

16 (d) The failure to consider the defendant's prior criminal  
17 history which was omitted from the offender score calculation  
18 pursuant to RCW 9.94A.525 results in a presumptive sentence that is  
19 clearly too lenient.

20 (3) Aggravating Circumstances - Considered by a Jury - Imposed by  
21 the Court

22 Except for circumstances listed in subsection (2) of this  
23 section, the following circumstances are an exclusive list of factors  
24 that can support a sentence above the standard range. Such facts  
25 should be determined by procedures specified in RCW 9.94A.537.

26 (a) The defendant's conduct during the commission of the current  
27 offense manifested deliberate cruelty to the victim.

28 (b) The defendant knew or should have known that the victim of  
29 the current offense was particularly vulnerable or incapable of  
30 resistance.

31 (c) The current offense was a violent offense, and the defendant  
32 knew that the victim of the current offense was pregnant.

33 (d) The current offense was a major economic offense or series of  
34 offenses, so identified by a consideration of any of the following  
35 factors:

36 (i) The current offense involved multiple victims or multiple  
37 incidents per victim;

38 (ii) The current offense involved attempted or actual monetary  
39 loss substantially greater than typical for the offense;

1 (iii) The current offense involved a high degree of  
2 sophistication or planning or occurred over a lengthy period of time;  
3 or

4 (iv) The defendant used his or her position of trust, confidence,  
5 or fiduciary responsibility to facilitate the commission of the  
6 current offense.

7 (e) The current offense was a major violation of the Uniform  
8 Controlled Substances Act, chapter 69.50 RCW (VUCSA), related to  
9 trafficking in controlled substances, which was more onerous than the  
10 typical offense of its statutory definition: The presence of ANY of  
11 the following may identify a current offense as a major VUCSA:

12 (i) The current offense involved at least three separate  
13 transactions in which controlled substances were sold, transferred,  
14 or possessed with intent to do so;

15 (ii) The current offense involved an attempted or actual sale or  
16 transfer of controlled substances in quantities substantially larger  
17 than for personal use;

18 (iii) The current offense involved the manufacture of controlled  
19 substances for use by other parties;

20 (iv) The circumstances of the current offense reveal the offender  
21 to have occupied a high position in the drug distribution hierarchy;

22 (v) The current offense involved a high degree of sophistication  
23 or planning, occurred over a lengthy period of time, or involved a  
24 broad geographic area of disbursement; or

25 (vi) The offender used his or her position or status to  
26 facilitate the commission of the current offense, including positions  
27 of trust, confidence or fiduciary responsibility (e.g., pharmacist,  
28 physician, or other medical professional).

29 (f) The current offense included a finding of sexual motivation  
30 pursuant to RCW 9.94A.835.

31 (g) The offense was part of an ongoing pattern of sexual abuse of  
32 the same victim under the age of eighteen years manifested by  
33 multiple incidents over a prolonged period of time.

34 (h) The current offense involved domestic violence, as defined in  
35 RCW 10.99.020, or stalking, as defined in RCW 9A.46.110, and one or  
36 more of the following was present:

37 (i) The offense was part of an ongoing pattern of psychological,  
38 physical, or sexual abuse of a victim or multiple victims manifested  
39 by multiple incidents over a prolonged period of time;

1 (ii) The offense occurred within sight or sound of the victim's  
2 or the offender's minor children under the age of eighteen years; or

3 (iii) The offender's conduct during the commission of the current  
4 offense manifested deliberate cruelty or intimidation of the victim.

5 (i) The offense resulted in the pregnancy of a child victim of  
6 rape.

7 (j) The defendant knew that the victim of the current offense was  
8 a youth who was not residing with a legal custodian and the defendant  
9 established or promoted the relationship for the primary purpose of  
10 victimization.

11 (k) The offense was committed with the intent to obstruct or  
12 impair human or animal health care or agricultural or forestry  
13 research or commercial production.

14 (l) The current offense is trafficking in the first degree or  
15 trafficking in the second degree and any victim was a minor at the  
16 time of the offense.

17 (m) The offense involved a high degree of sophistication or  
18 planning.

19 (n) The defendant used his or her position of trust, confidence,  
20 or fiduciary responsibility to facilitate the commission of the  
21 current offense.

22 (o) The defendant committed a current sex offense, has a history  
23 of sex offenses, and is not amenable to treatment.

24 (p) The offense involved an invasion of the victim's privacy.

25 (q) The defendant demonstrated or displayed an egregious lack of  
26 remorse.

27 (r) The offense involved a destructive and foreseeable impact on  
28 persons other than the victim.

29 (s) The defendant committed the offense to obtain or maintain his  
30 or her membership or to advance his or her position in the hierarchy  
31 of an organization, association, or identifiable group.

32 (t) The defendant committed the current offense shortly after  
33 being released from incarceration.

34 (u) The current offense is a burglary and the victim of the  
35 burglary was present in the building or residence when the crime was  
36 committed.

37 (v) The offense was committed against a law enforcement officer  
38 who was performing his or her official duties at the time of the  
39 offense, the offender knew that the victim was a law enforcement

1 officer, and the victim's status as a law enforcement officer is not  
2 an element of the offense.

3 (w) The defendant committed the offense against a victim who was  
4 acting as a good samaritan.

5 (x) The defendant committed the offense against a public official  
6 or officer of the court in retaliation of the public official's  
7 performance of his or her duty to the criminal justice system.

8 (y) The victim's injuries substantially exceed the level of  
9 bodily harm necessary to satisfy the elements of the offense. This  
10 aggravator is not an exception to RCW 9.94A.530(2).

11 (z)(i)(A) The current offense is theft in the first degree, theft  
12 in the second degree, possession of stolen property in the first  
13 degree, or possession of stolen property in the second degree; (B)  
14 the stolen property involved is metal property; and (C) the property  
15 damage to the victim caused in the course of the theft of metal  
16 property is more than three times the value of the stolen metal  
17 property, or the theft of the metal property creates a public hazard.

18 (ii) For purposes of this subsection, "metal property" means  
19 commercial metal property, private metal property, or nonferrous  
20 metal property, as defined in RCW 19.290.010.

21 (aa) The defendant committed the offense with the intent to  
22 directly or indirectly cause any benefit, aggrandizement, gain,  
23 profit, or other advantage to or for a criminal street gang as  
24 defined in RCW 9.94A.030, its reputation, influence, or membership.

25 (bb) The current offense involved paying to view, over the  
26 internet in violation of RCW 9.68A.075, depictions of a minor engaged  
27 in an act of sexually explicit conduct as defined in RCW 9.68A.011(4)  
28 (a) through (g).

29 (cc) The offense was intentionally committed because the  
30 defendant perceived the victim to be homeless, as defined in RCW  
31 9.94A.030.

32 (dd) The current offense involved a felony crime against persons,  
33 except for assault in the third degree pursuant to RCW  
34 9A.36.031(1)(k), that occurs in a courtroom, jury room, judge's  
35 chamber, or any waiting area or corridor immediately adjacent to a  
36 courtroom, jury room, or judge's chamber. This subsection shall apply  
37 only: (i) During the times when a courtroom, jury room, or judge's  
38 chamber is being used for judicial purposes during court proceedings;  
39 and (ii) if signage was posted in compliance with RCW 2.28.200 at the  
40 time of the offense.

1 (ee) During the commission of the current offense, the defendant  
2 was driving in the opposite direction of the normal flow of traffic  
3 on a multiple lane highway, as defined by RCW 46.04.350, with a  
4 posted speed limit of forty-five miles per hour or greater.

5 (ff) The current offense involved the assault of a utility worker  
6 or employee of any publicly or privately owned utility company or  
7 agency, who is at the time of the act engaged in official duties,  
8 including: (i) The maintenance or repair of utility poles, lines,  
9 conduits, pipes, or other infrastructure; or (ii) connecting,  
10 disconnecting, or recoding utility meters.

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