

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1832

As Reported by House Committee On: Public Safety

Title: An act relating to the commercially sexually exploited children statewide coordinating committee.

Brief Description: Concerning the commercially sexually exploited children statewide coordinating committee.

Sponsors: Representatives Pellicciotti, Irwin, Lovick, Ormsby and Ortiz-Self.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Public Safety: 2/13/17, 2/16/17 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Statewide Coordinating Committee until June 30, 2023, and makes changes to its reporting requirements.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Goodman, Chair; Pellicciotti, Vice Chair; Klippert, Ranking Minority Member; Hayes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Chapman, Griffey, Holy, Orwall, Pettigrew and Van Werven.

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

The Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Statewide Coordinating Committee (Committee) was established in 2013 to address the issue of children who are commercially sexually exploited, to examine the practices of local and regional entities involved in addressing sexually exploited children, and to make recommendations on statewide laws and practices. The Committee must meet at least annually.

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.

The Committee is convened by the Office of the Attorney General. The Department of Commerce assists the Office of the Attorney General with the Committee agenda planning and administrative and clerical support.

The Committee members include representatives of:

- each caucus in the House of Representatives and the Senate;
- the Office of the Governor;
- the Children's Administration;
- the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration;
- the Office of the Attorney General;
- the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- the Administrative Office of the Courts;
- the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs;
- the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission;
- the Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys;
- the Office of Public Defense;
- the Center for Children and Youth Justice;
- three community service providers that provide direct services to commercially sexually exploited children;
- two nongovernmental organizations familiar with the issues affecting commercially sexually exploited children;
- the Washington Superior Court Judges Association;
- the Washington Association of Juvenile Court Administrators;
- any existing chairs of regional task forces on commercially sexually exploited children;
- the criminal defense bar;
- the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy;
- the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs;
- representatives from organizations providing inpatient chemical dependency treatment and mental health treatment; and
- a survivor of human trafficking.

The duties of the Committee include, but are not limited to: overseeing and reviewing the implementation of the Washington State Model Protocol for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children; receiving reports and data from local and regional entities regarding the incidence of commercially sexually exploited children in their areas; reviewing recommendations from local and regional entities regarding policy changes that would improve the effectiveness of local response practices; and making recommendations regarding data collection and strategic local investments to address the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

In 2015 the Legislature assigned additional duties to the Committee related to reviewing implementation of Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6476 (ESSB 6746), which was legislation enacted in 2010 that made a number of changes to address issues related to commercially sexually exploited children. The Committee was required to report its findings regarding this review to the Legislature by February 1, 2016.

The Committee expires on June 30, 2017, and must report its findings by that date to the appropriate committees of the Legislature and to any other known statewide committees addressing trafficking or the commercial sex trade.

Summary of Bill:

The Committee's expiration date is extended to June 30, 2023. The reporting requirement is changed to an annual requirement, and the Committee must report on recommendations, as well as findings. The statutory reference to the reporting due date regarding the review of the implementation of ESSB 6476 (2010) is stricken, making that review an ongoing requirement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Committee does critical work and will expire in June if not reauthorized. Efforts to combat the scourge of trafficking of children and youth began during the early part of the century. A statewide protocol was developed for improving responses to victims of child sex trafficking, completed through private funding and grant money. This work was completed in 2012 and is one of its kind in the nation. The model protocol creates multidisciplinary teams that work on a case-by-case basis, and creates regional task forces. There were five task forces in 2014, by the end of this year there will be 11, reaching over 75 percent of the population. That work is reported to the Committee. One thing that nobody else is currently doing is collecting good data, which can be analyzed to allow for better informed decision making, to identify affected children, and to evaluate whether the response is effective. One of the reasons the Committee was not made permanent upfront is that there is hope that this issue will be eradicated.

Washington is a national leader when it comes to combating human trafficking, and this issue is a priority for the Office of the Attorney General. This interdisciplinary Committee is a big part of the effort to combat human trafficking. Partnering with nonprofits and other state agencies is vital, as the biggest void is coordination. There are counties and local task forces that are ahead of the curve, but there is work to be done with respect to statewide implementation. The Committee helps bring these groups together. Washington just applied for a Department of Justice grant, and the Committee is the foundation for that application.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Pellicciotti, prime sponsor; Bobbe Bridge, Center for Children and Youth Justice; and Farshad Talebi, Office of the Attorney General.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.