

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1026

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to counties contracting for public defender services.

Brief Description: Excepting public defender services from county competitive bid requirements.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Ludwig, H. Myers, Chandler, Bray, Edmondson and Springer.)

Brief History:

Report by Committee on:

Local Government, February 5, 1993, DPS;

Passed House, February 22, 1993, 94-0;

Amended by Senate.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives H. Myers, Chair; Bray, Vice Chair; Edmondson, Ranking Minority Member; Reams, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dunshee; R. Fisher; Horn; Rayburn; Romero; Springer; Van Luven; and Zellinsky.

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background: Counties are required to competitively bid contracts for the purchase of materials, equipment, supplies, and services when the contract equals or exceeds \$2,500 in value.

The competitive bidding requirements do not apply to performance-based contracts for energy equipment and supplies, or to contracts for election materials. There is no exemption from the competitive bidding requirements for public defender services.

Summary of Bill: A county with a population of less than 175,000 is not required to competitively bid contracts for public defender services.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S): The language that limited the exemption to counties with a population of less than

175,000 is removed. Competitive bidding provisions do not apply to contracts for public defender services by a county.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Competent counsel is needed on both sides of the table in the criminal process or the process slows way down. An experienced attorney knows which cases to settle and which cases to bring to trial. Going with the lowest bidder will eventually cost more money because of extended appeals and unnecessary motions.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: (pro) Representative Curt Ludwig, prime sponsor; Larry Ziegler, Benton County Public Defender; and Ron Main, King County.

VOTE ON FINAL PASSAGE:

Yeas 94; Excused 4

Excused: Representatives Appelwick, Roland, Schmidt, Silver