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**Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness  
Committee**

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**HB 2534**

**Brief Description:** Establishing a program to verify the address of registered sex offenders and kidnapping offenders.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hurst, Pearson and O'Brien.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Establishes a grant program administered by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs for sex offender address verification by local governments.
- Assigns responsibility for sex offender address verification to county sheriffs.
- Removes the 90-day reporting requirement for level II and III sex offenders.

**Hearing Date:** 1/12/10

**Staff:** Alexa Silver (786-7190).

**Background:**

A sex or kidnapping offender must register with the county sheriff of the county in which he or she resides. The offender must provide his or her name, residential address, date and place of birth, place of employment, crime of conviction, date and place of conviction, aliases, Social Security number, photograph, and fingerprints.

If an offender's address changes, the offender must send signed written notice of the change to the county sheriff within 72 hours of moving.

*Verification of a Registered Sex Offender's Address.*

The chief law enforcement officer of a jurisdiction must make reasonable attempts to verify the address of registered sex offenders in the jurisdiction. In unincorporated areas, the sheriff is

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responsible for address verification. In cities and towns, the police chief or town marshal is responsible for address verification.

"Reasonable attempts" are defined to include: (a) for registered sex offenders, an annual mailing of an address verification form; and (b) for sexually violent predators, a mailing every 90 days of an address verification form. The offender must sign and return the form to the chief law enforcement officer of the jurisdiction within 10 days of receipt.

If an offender fails to return the address verification form or cannot be located, the chief law enforcement officer must make reasonable attempts to locate the offender. The law enforcement officer must forward this information to the sheriff and the Washington State Patrol for inclusion in the central sex offender registry.

#### *Registered Sex Offender Reporting Requirement.*

Level II and III sex offenders who have a fixed residence must report to the county sheriff every 90 days. If the offender complies with the 90-day reporting requirement for five years, he or she may petition the superior court to be relieved of the reporting requirement. The court may grant the petition if the offender has complied with the requirement for five years, the offender has not been convicted of a sex offender registration violation for five years, and the court determines the reporting does not serve a public safety purpose.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

##### *Verification of a Registered Sex Offender's Address.*

When funded, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) shall administer a grant program for sex offender address verification by local governments. The WASPC must:

- enter into performance-based agreements with local governments so that offenders' addresses are verified every 12 months for level I and unclassified offenders, every six months for level II offenders, and every three months for level III offenders;
- collect performance data; and
- submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature.

The county sheriff with whom a sex offender has registered, rather than the chief law enforcement officer of the jurisdiction, is responsible for the following offender address verification tasks:

- verifying the offender's address pursuant to the WASPC grant program;
- sending an annual address verification form to offenders in the county;
- sending an address verification form every 90 days to sexually violent predators in the county;
- receiving address verification forms by certified mail with return receipt requested; and
- forwarding information regarding offenders who are not at their last registered address to the Washington State Patrol.

The county sheriff may enter into an agreement with police chiefs or town marshals to fulfill these address verification obligations.

*Registered Sex Offender Reporting Requirement.*

Level II and III sex offenders with a fixed residence are no longer required to report to the county sheriff every 90 days.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 5, 2010.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.