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Governor



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To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Substitute Senate Bill 5097 entitled:

“AN ACT Relating to juveniles with developmental disabilities who are in correctional detention centers, juvenile correction institutions or facilities, and jails.”

This bill would establish a work group to address issues relating to juveniles with developmental disabilities who are confined in juvenile detention or correctional facilities. The work group would be required to report to the Legislature by December 1, 2011, with recommendations concerning specific topics related to juveniles with developmental disabilities and the juvenile justice system. If recommended by the work group, a screening tool and related materials would be developed by September 1, 2012, to assist juvenile detention and correction institutions and facilities in identification of offenders with the most common types of developmental disabilities. The work group would expire on January 1, 2013.

I support the intent behind this bill, but not the process established. As I have stated many times, I believe that, in most cases, work groups that are charged with making recommendations on policy objectives should not be created in statute. However, development of the information and recommendations outlined in the bill would be useful to executive agencies and the Legislature. The Washington Developmental Disabilities Council has indicated it would participate in the work group and underwrite related costs with monies allocated from federal funds. I am confident the Washington Developmental Disabilities Council will be able to coordinate with the parties listed in the bill and accomplish the tasks outlined without a statute. Representatives of the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration have indicated a willingness to participate in a work group established by the Washington Developmental Disabilities Council.

For this reason, I have vetoed Substitute Senate Bill 5097 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor