

SUBJECT: Funds expended by certified crime stoppers programs

COMMITTEE: Public Safety — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes — Oakley, Bailey, Allen, Carter, Driver, Edwards

0 nays

3 absent — Luna, Madden, McCoulskey

WITNESSES: For — None

Against — None

On — David Cobos

DIGEST: HB 809 would allow a local crime stoppers program certified by the state Crime Stoppers Council to use up to 10 percent of certain income received annually from criminal defendants to pay administrative expenses of the local program. The remainder of the money could only be used to reward persons whose report of criminal activity led to a defendant being indicted or charged with a felony offense. The bill would also update the law to change references from probation to community service.

The bill would take effect September 1, 1995.

SUPPORTERS
SAY: HB 809 would foster the development of the certified local crime stoppers programs. These programs lead to the recovery of \$50 of stolen property or illegal narcotics for every \$1 cash reward dollar spent and should be supported. Allowing more money to go to the administration of the programs for advertising and other program development would in turn lead to the apprehension of more criminals and more recovered property.

The sections that would be amended already allow the programs to receive money from defendants on community supervision and from defendants ordered to repay a crime stoppers program for reward money. However, the law now requires that the money from both of these sources go only toward rewards, limiting the development of the programs. It makes little

sense to earmark money solely for rewards when the only way to encourage people to seek them is to get the word out through a fully developed program. The bill would allow only a small portion of the money to be earmarked for administration, leaving adequate funds for rewards. An existing requirement for an independent annual audit of programs would prevent any spending for unauthorized purposes.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

No apparent opposition