

MOTION 705

by

COUNCILMAN EDWARD HEAVEY

WHEREAS the Washington State Legislature has recently enacted legislation empowering Counties and other governmental units to create Public Defender systems, and

WHEREAS the present system of appointing counsel for indigent felony defendants on a case-by-case basis is, as presently constituted, incapable of routinely and systematically providing legal services early enough in the criminal process to comply with Constitutional requirements, and

WHEREAS many poor persons whose liberty is put in jeopardy in non-felony proceedings initiated by County officers are not provided with legal representation under the present system, and

WHEREAS existing cost analyses indicate that for jurisdictions of over 400,000 population a Public Defender system can provide representation for indigent persons at a lower cost per case than can an assigned counsel system, and

WHEREAS the Defender Association, a private non-profit corporation, is currently in the process of establishing a Public Defender office for the City of Seattle and has invited this Council to investigate the possibility of providing the same service to the County on a contract basis, and

WHEREAS the establishment of a Public Defender system in Seattle has broad public support and the active participation of the Bar Association as well as numerous groups in the community;

THEREFORE it is resolved that the Operations and Judicial Committee be authorized and instructed to consider the advisability of establishing a Public Defender system for the County as a means of providing legal services for persons financially unable to obtain such services and who, as a result of proceedings within the County's jurisdiction, are in jeopardy of losing their freedom.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Operations and Judicial Committee, in its descretion, appoint an Advisory Committee composed of concerned and knowledgeable persons to aid it in its deliberations and recommendations.

PASSED THIS 14<sup>th</sup> day of July, 1969

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
King County Washington

John T. O'Brien  
CHAIRMAN

ATTESTED:

Roy Plummer  
ACTING CLERK OF THE COUNTY

EH/cj  
7-8-69