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March 2, 1988  
4407:BB:clt

INTRODUCED BY: Bill Reams

PROPOSED BY: 88 - 158

MOTION NO. 7130

A MOTION related to arson prevention requesting the Executive to prepare a plan and proposed budget for the development of a juvenile arson prevention program for King County, to be submitted to the council for approval within ninety days of the adoption of this motion.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

WHEREAS, arson within King County increased by about 65% in 1987, attributable almost entirely to juvenile offenders, with 156 persons out of the 205 arrested being classified as juveniles, and

WHEREAS, the increase in the number of juvenile fire-setters in King County is following a national trend, as determined by the Arson Task Force of the National Committee on Property Insurance, and

WHEREAS, juvenile fire-setting has been determined usually to be a symptom of underlying problems including physical abuse, sexual abuse, and drug or alcohol abuse, and

WHEREAS, the profile of juvenile arsonists indicates that they commonly fall into four categories: those needing only proper education to correct their behavior; those who set fires in reaction to problems in their lives or in their families; those suffering from severe emotional problems requiring extensive psychiatric treatment, and those whose behavior is judged to be criminal and need to be prosecuted, and

WHEREAS, a program that provides for the screening of juvenile fire-setters to determine to which group the juvenile offender belongs and channels them into the appropriate assistance program, has proven to be effective in reducing the incidence and recitivism of juvenile arson, and

1 WHEREAS, the council finds that the development of such a  
2 program within King County is necessary if the overall fire  
3 prevention program is to be positively affected;

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

5 A. The county executive is requested to prepare a plan,  
6 including a multi-year budget, for the development of a juvenile  
7 arson prevention program, said plan to be submitted for council  
8 review and approval within ninety days of the adoption of this  
9 motion.

10 B. The objectives of the program shall include, but not be  
11 limited to:

12 1. The coordination of juvenile arson prevention efforts  
13 under the supervision of the county fire marshall or whomever the  
14 county executive shall designate, utilizing to the greatest  
15 extent possible the existing resources of fire prevention and  
16 other government agencies as appropriate.

17 2. The education of students, K through 12, in fire  
18 prevention and the causes and effects of arson.

19 3. The rehabilitation of juvenile fire-setters by  
20 immediate intervention by trained personnel which identifies the  
21 root causes of the action; and channeling the offenders into an  
22 appropriate program to assist him or her including the counseling  
23 by trained fire or family assistance personnel as appropriate,  
24 and the provision of psychological assistance when indicated.

25 4. The provision for the direction of focused, aggressive  
26 effort toward the individual offender rather than merely a  
27 general program that fails to recognize individual situations.

28 PASSED this 21st day of March, 1988.

29  
30 KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

31 Gary Grant  
32 Chairman

33 ATTEST:

Gerald A. Pelt  
Deputy Clerk of the Council