

CHAPTER 206

[Substitute House Bill No. 615]

DEATH PENALTY

AN ACT Relating to the death penalty; amending section 9A.32.040, chapter 260, Laws of 1975 1st ex. sess. and RCW 9A.32.040; amending section 1, chapter 9, Laws of 1975-'76 2nd ex. sess. (Initiative Measure No. 316, section 1) and RCW 9A.32.045; amending section 2, chapter 9, Laws of 1975-'76 2nd ex. sess. (Initiative Measure No. 316, section 2) and RCW 9A.32.046; amending section 3, chapter 9, Laws of 1975-'76 2nd ex. sess. (Initiative Measure No. 316, section 3) and RCW 9A.32.047; adding a new chapter to Title 10 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 9.01 RCW; prescribing penalties; and declaring an emergency.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. When a defendant is charged with the crime of murder in the first degree as defined in RCW 9A.32.030(1)(a), the prosecuting attorney or the prosecuting attorney's designee shall file a written notice of intention to request a proceeding to determine whether or not the death penalty should be imposed when the prosecution has reason to believe that one or more aggravating circumstances, as set forth in RCW 9A.32.045 as now or hereafter amended, was present and the prosecution intends to prove the presence of such circumstance or circumstances in a special sentencing proceeding under section 2 of this 1977 amendatory act.

The notice of intention to request the death penalty must be served on the defendant or the defendant's attorney and filed with the court within thirty days of the defendant's arraignment in superior court on the charge of murder in the first degree under RCW 9A.32.030(1)(a). The notice shall specify the aggravating circumstance or circumstances upon which the prosecuting attorney bases the request for the death penalty. The court may, within the thirty day period upon good cause being shown, extend the period for the service and filing of notice.

If the prosecution does not serve and file written notice of intent to request the death penalty within the specified time the prosecuting attorney may not request the death penalty.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. (1) If notice of intention to request the death penalty has been served and filed by the prosecution in accordance with section 1 of this 1977 amendatory act, then a special sentencing proceeding shall be held in the event the defendant is found guilty of murder in the first degree under RCW 9A.32.030(1)(a).

(2) If the prosecution has filed a request for the death penalty in accordance with section 1 of this 1977 amendatory act, and the trial jury returns a verdict of murder in the first degree under RCW 9A.32.030(1)(a), then, at such time as the verdict is returned, the trial judge shall reconvene the same trial jury to determine in a separate special sentencing proceeding whether there are one or more aggravating circumstances and whether there are mitigating circumstances sufficient to merit leniency, as provided in RCW 9A.32.045 as now or hereafter amended, and to answer special questions pursuant to subsection (10) of this section. The special sentencing proceeding shall be held as soon as possible following the return of the jury verdict.

(3) At the commencement of the special sentencing proceeding the judge shall instruct the jury as to the nature and purpose of the proceeding and as to the consequences of its findings as provided in RCW 9A.32.040 as now or hereafter amended.

(4) In the special sentencing proceeding, evidence may be presented relating to the presence of any aggravating or mitigating circumstances as enumerated in RCW 9A.32.045 as now or hereafter amended. Evidence of aggravating circumstances shall be limited to evidence relevant to those aggravating circumstances specified in the notice required by section 1 of this 1977 amendatory act.

(5) Any relevant evidence which the court deems to have probative value may be received regardless of its admissibility under usual rules of evidence: PROVIDED, That the defendant is accorded a fair opportunity to rebut any hearsay statements: PROVIDED FURTHER, That evidence secured in violation of the Constitutions of the United States or the state of Washington shall not be admissible.

(6) Upon the conclusion of the evidence, the judge shall give the jury appropriate instructions and the prosecution and the defendant or defendant's counsel shall be permitted to present argument. The prosecution shall open and conclude the argument to the jury.

(7) The jury shall then retire to deliberate. Upon reaching a decision, the jury shall specify each aggravating circumstance that it unanimously determines to have been established beyond a reasonable doubt. In the event the jury finds no aggravating circumstances the defendant shall be sentenced pursuant to RCW 9A.32.040(3) as now or hereafter amended.

(8) If the jury finds there are one or more aggravating circumstances it must then decide whether it is also unanimously convinced beyond a reasonable doubt there are not sufficient mitigating circumstances to merit leniency. If the jury makes such a finding, it shall proceed to answer the special questions submitted pursuant to subsection (10) of this section.

(9) If the jury finds there are one or more aggravating circumstances but fails to be convinced beyond a reasonable doubt there are not sufficient mitigating circumstances to merit leniency the defendant shall be sentenced pursuant to RCW 9A.32.040(2) as now or hereafter amended.

(10) If the jury finds that there are one or more aggravating circumstances and is unanimously convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that there are not sufficient mitigating circumstances to merit leniency, the jury shall answer the following questions:

(a) Did the evidence presented at trial establish the guilt of the defendant with clear certainty?

(b) Are you convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that there is a probability that the defendant would commit additional criminal acts of violence that would constitute a continuing threat to society?

The state shall have the burden of proving each question and the court shall instruct the jury that it may not answer either question in the affirmative unless it agrees unanimously.

If the jury answers both questions in the affirmative, the defendant shall be sentenced pursuant to RCW 9A.32.040(1) as now or hereafter amended.

If the jury answers either question in the negative the defendant shall be sentenced pursuant to RCW 9A.32.040(2) as now or hereafter amended.

Sec. 3. Section 9A.32.040, chapter 260, Laws of 1975 1st ex. sess. and RCW 9A.32.040 are each amended to read as follows:

Notwithstanding RCW 9A.32.030(2), any person convicted of the crime of murder in the first degree shall be sentenced ~~((to life imprisonment))~~ as follows:

(1) If, pursuant to a special sentencing proceeding held under section 2 of this 1977 amendatory act, the jury finds that there are one or more aggravating circumstances and that there are not sufficient mitigating circumstances to merit leniency, and makes an affirmative finding on both of the special questions submitted to the jury pursuant to section 2(10) of this 1977 amendatory act, the sentence shall be death;

(2) If, pursuant to a special sentencing proceeding held under section 2 of this 1977 amendatory act, the jury finds that there are one or more aggravating circumstances but fails to find that there are not sufficient mitigating circumstances to merit leniency, or the jury answers in the negative either of the special questions submitted pursuant to section 2(10) of this 1977 amendatory act, the sentence shall be life imprisonment without possibility of release or parole. A person sentenced to life imprisonment under this subsection shall not have that sentence suspended, deferred, or commuted by any judicial officer, and the board of prison terms and paroles shall never parole a prisoner nor reduce the period of confinement. The convicted person shall not be released as a result of any type of good time calculation nor shall the department of social and health services permit the convicted person to participate in any temporary release or furlough program; and

(3) In all other convictions for first degree murder, the sentence shall be life imprisonment.

Sec. 4. Section 1, chapter 9, Laws of 1975-'76 2nd ex. sess. (Initiative Measure No. 316, section 1) and RCW 9A.32.045 are each amended to read as follows:

~~((A person is guilty of aggravated murder in the first degree when he commits murder in the first degree as defined in RCW 9A.32.030 under or accompanied by any of))~~ (1) In a special sentencing proceeding under section 2 of this 1977 amendatory act, the following shall constitute aggravating circumstances:

~~((1))~~ (a) The victim was a law enforcement officer or fire fighter and was performing his or her official duties at the time of the killing and the victim was known or reasonably should have been known to be such at the time of the killing.

~~((2))~~ (b) At the time of the act resulting in the death, the defendant was serving a term of imprisonment in a state correctional institution or had escaped or was on authorized or unauthorized leave from a state correctional institution, or was in custody in a local jail and subject to commitment to a state correctional institution.

~~((3))~~ (c) The defendant committed the murder pursuant to an agreement that ~~((he))~~ the defendant receive money or other thing of value for committing the murder.

~~((4))~~ (d) The defendant had solicited another to commit the murder and had paid or agreed to pay such person money or other thing of value for committing the murder.

~~((5))~~ The defendant committed the murder with intent to conceal the commission of a crime, or to protect or conceal the identity of any person committing the same, or with intent to delay, hinder or obstruct the administration of justice by preventing any person from being a witness or producing evidence in any investigation or proceeding authorized by law or by influencing any person's official action as a juror) (e) The murder was of a judge, juror, witness, prosecuting attorney, a deputy prosecuting attorney, or defense attorney because of the exercise of his or her official duty in relation to the defendant.

~~((6))~~ (f) There was more than one victim and the said murders were part of a common scheme or plan, or the result of a single act of the defendant.

~~((7))~~ (g) The defendant committed the murder in the course of ((or)), in furtherance of ((the crime of rape or kidnaping or in immediate flight therefrom)), or in immediate flight from the crimes of either (i) robbery in the first or second degree, (ii) rape in the first or second degree, (iii) burglary in the first degree, (iv) arson in the first degree, or (v) kidnaping in which the defendant intentionally abducted another person with intent to hold the person for ransom or reward, or as a shield or hostage, and the killing was committed with the reasonable expectation that the death of the deceased or another would result.

(h) The murder was committed to obstruct or hinder the investigative, research, or reporting activities of anyone regularly employed as a newsreporter, including anyone self-employed in such capacity.

(2) In deciding whether there are mitigating circumstances sufficient to merit leniency, the jury may consider any relevant factors, including, but not limited to, the following:

(a) The defendant has no significant history of prior criminal activity;

(b) The murder was committed while the defendant was under the influence of extreme mental disturbance;

(c) The victim consented to the homicidal act;

(d) The defendant was an accomplice in a murder committed by another person and the defendant's participation in the homicidal act was relatively minor;

(e) The defendant acted under duress or under the domination of another person;

(f) At the time of the murder, the capacity of the defendant to appreciate the criminality (wrongfulness) of his or her conduct or to conform his or her conduct to the requirements of law was substantially impaired as a result of mental disease or defect; and

(g) The age of the defendant at the time of the crime calls for leniency.

Sec. 5. Section 2, chapter 9, Laws of 1975-'76 2nd ex. sess. (Initiative Measure No. 316, section 2) and RCW 9A.32.046 are each amended to read as follows:

~~((A person found guilty of aggravated murder in the first degree as defined in RCW 9A.32.045, shall be punished by the mandatory sentence of death.))~~ Once a person is found guilty of ((aggravated)) murder in the first degree((, as defined in RCW 9A.32.045)) under RCW 9A.32.030(1)(a) with one or more aggravating circumstances and without sufficient mitigating circumstances to merit leniency and the jury has made affirmative findings on both of the special questions submitted pursuant to section 2(10) of this 1977 amendatory act, neither the court nor the jury shall have the discretion to suspend or defer the imposition or execution of the

sentence of death. (~~Such sentence shall be automatic upon any conviction of aggravated first degree murder. The death sentence shall take place at the state penitentiary under the direction of and pursuant to arrangements made by the superintendent thereof. PROVIDED, That~~) The time of such execution shall be set by the trial judge at the time of imposing sentence and as a part thereof.

Sec. 6. Section 3, chapter 9, Laws of 1975-'76 2nd ex. sess. (Initiative Measure No. 316, section 3) and RCW 9A.32.047 are each amended to read as follows:

In the event that the governor commutes a death sentence or in the event that the death penalty is held to be unconstitutional by the United States supreme court or the supreme court of the state of Washington (~~in any of the circumstances specified in RCW 9A.32.045;~~) the penalty under RCW 9A.32.046 (~~for aggravated murder in the first degree in those circumstances~~) shall be imprisonment in the state penitentiary for life without possibility of release or parole. A person sentenced to life imprisonment under this section shall not have that sentence suspended, deferred, or commuted by any judicial officer, and the board of prison terms and paroles shall never parole a prisoner (~~or~~) nor reduce the period of confinement (~~nor release the~~). The convicted person shall not be released as a result of any (~~automatic~~) type of good time calculation nor shall the department of social and health services permit the convicted person to participate in any (~~work~~) temporary release or furlough program.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 7. (1) Whenever the death penalty is imposed, and upon the judgment becoming final in the trial court, the sentence shall be reviewed on the record by the supreme court of Washington. The clerk of the trial court within ten days after receiving the transcript, shall transmit the entire record and transcript to the supreme court of Washington together with a notice prepared by the clerk and a report prepared by the trial judge. The notice shall set forth the title and docket number of the case, the name of the defendant and the name and address of the defendant's attorney, a narrative statement of the judgment, the offense, and the punishment prescribed. The report shall be in the form of a standard questionnaire prepared and supplied by the supreme court of Washington.

(2) The supreme court of Washington shall consider the punishment as well as any errors enumerated by way of appeal.

(3) With regard to the sentence, the court shall determine:

(a) Whether the evidence supports the jury's findings; and

(b) Whether the sentence of death is excessive or disproportionate to the penalty imposed in similar cases, considering both the crime and the defendant.

(4) Both the defendant and the state shall have the right to submit briefs within the time provided by the court, and to present oral argument to the court.

(5) The court shall include in its decision a reference to those similar cases which it took into consideration. In addition to its authority regarding correction of errors, the court, with regard to review of death sentences, shall be authorized to:

(a) Affirm the sentence of death; or

(b) Set the sentence aside and remand the case for resentencing by the trial judge based on the record and argument of counsel. The records of those similar cases referred to by the supreme court of Washington in its decision and the extracts prepared therefor shall be provided to the resentencing judge for the judge's consideration.

(6) The sentence review shall be in addition to direct appeal, if taken, and the review and appeal shall be consolidated for consideration. The court shall render its decision on legal errors enumerated, the factual substantiation of the verdict, and the validity of the sentence.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 8. There is added to chapter 9.01 RCW a new section to read as follows:

No person in the state shall be placed in legal jeopardy of any kind whatsoever for protecting by any reasonable means necessary, himself, his family, or his real or personal property, or for coming to the aid of another who is in imminent danger of or the victim of aggravated assault, armed robbery, holdup, rape, murder, or any other heinous crime.

When a substantial question of self defense in such a case shall exist which needs legal investigation or court action for the full determination of the facts, and the defendant's actions are subsequently found justified under the intent of this section, the state of Washington shall indemnify or reimburse such defendant for all loss of time, legal fees, or other expenses involved in his defense.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 9. Sections 1, 2, and 7 of this 1977 amendatory act shall constitute a new chapter in Title 10 RCW.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 10. If any provision of this 1977 amendatory act, or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act, or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 11. This 1977 amendatory act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, the support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately.

Passed the House June 3, 1977.

Passed the Senate June 2, 1977.

Approved by the Governor June 10, 1977.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State June 10, 1977.

CHAPTER 207

[Substitute House Bill No. 625]

CENTRAL CREDIT UNIONS

AN ACT Relating to central credit unions; creating new sections; and adding a new chapter to Title 31 RCW.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. A central credit union may be organized and operated under this chapter. The central credit union shall have all the rights and powers granted in and be subject to all provisions of chapter 31.12 RCW which are not inconsistent with this chapter. Such credit union shall use the term "central" in its official name. Any central credit union in existence on the effective date of this act in the state of Washington shall operate under the provisions of this chapter.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the central credit union may adopt bylaws enabling it to exercise any of the powers, as