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HOUSE BILL 2164

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State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Representatives Pettigrew, Haler, Santos, McCoy, Miloscia, Kagi, Hunt, Kenney, Sullivan, Darneille, Seaquist, Roberts, Chase, Hasegawa, Dickerson, and Goodman

Read first time 02/11/09. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & Children's Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to evaluating selected child welfare practices to  
2 determine their impact on remediating racial disproportionality in  
3 Washington's child welfare system; adding a new section to chapter  
4 13.34 RCW; and creating a new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that research  
7 conducted by the Washington state institute for public policy released  
8 in June 2008, demonstrates that racial disproportionality exists in  
9 Washington's child welfare system and that the greatest  
10 disproportionality occurs when the initial referral to child protective  
11 services is made and when the decision is made to place a child in out-  
12 of-home care. The institute's research also demonstrates that children  
13 of African-American, Native American, and Latino families have  
14 disproportionately longer lengths of stay in foster care.

15 (2) The legislature finds further that the department of social and  
16 health services, in a December 2008 report issued pursuant to  
17 Substitute House Bill No. 1472 of 2007, identified initial  
18 recommendations for remediation of racial diproportionality, including  
19 examining specific current child welfare practices, structured

1 decision-making and family team decision-making, to determine whether  
2 and how these practices might result in reducing or eliminating racial  
3 disproportionality.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 13.34 RCW  
5 to read as follows:

6 (1) Within amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, or  
7 within funding made available by private grant or contribution, the  
8 Washington state institute for public policy shall evaluate the  
9 department of social and health services' use of structured decision-  
10 making practices and implementation of the family team decision-making  
11 model to determine whether and how those child protection and child  
12 welfare efforts result in reducing disproportionate representation of  
13 African-American, Native American, and Latino children in the state's  
14 child welfare system. The institute shall analyze the points in the  
15 system at which current data reflect the greatest levels of  
16 disproportionality. The institute shall report its findings to the  
17 legislature and the department of social and health services by  
18 September 1, 2010.

19 (2) If adequate funding is not made available through state  
20 appropriation or through private grant or contribution to  
21 simultaneously study the impact on racial disproportionality of both  
22 the structured decision-making process and family team decision-making  
23 model, the institute shall first study and report on the family team  
24 decision-making model. The department of social and health services  
25 and the Washington state institute for public policy jointly, shall:

26 (a) Promptly complete and execute a data sharing agreement to  
27 comply with the department's confidential or records requirements and  
28 to provide the institute with data and other information necessary to  
29 conduct its evaluation; and

30 (b) Identify potential sources of private funding to supplement any  
31 state appropriated amounts.

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