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**SENATE BILL 5399**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2019 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Pedersen, Walsh, Dhingra, Frockt, Kuderer, Salomon, Mullet, Palumbo, Holy, Wellman, and Wilson, C.

AN ACT Relating to child relocation by a person with joint decision-making authority and equal residential time; amending RCW 26.09.430, 26.09.520, and 26.09.410; and adding a new section to chapter 26.09 RCW.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 26.09 RCW to read as follows:

(1) If the person proposing relocation of a child has substantially equal residential time:

(a) The presumption in RCW 26.09.520 does not apply; and

(b) In determining whether to restrict a parent's right to relocate with a child or in determining a modification of the court order as defined in RCW 26.09.410 based on the proposed relocation, the court shall make a determination in the best interests of the child considering the factors set forth in RCW 26.09.520.

(2) For the purposes of this section and RCW 26.09.430, "substantially equal residential time" includes arrangements in which forty-five percent or more of the child's residential time is spent with each parent. The percentage will be determined based on the designated amount of time in the court order unless: (a) There has been an ongoing pattern of substantial deviation from the residential schedule; (b) both parents have agreed to the deviation; and (c) the deviation is not based on circumstances that are beyond either parent's ability to control.

**Sec.**  RCW 26.09.430 and 2000 c 21 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

Except as provided in RCW 26.09.460, a person with whom the child resides a majority of the time, or a person with substantially equal residential time, shall notify every other person entitled to residential time or visitation with the child under a court order if the person intends to relocate. Notice shall be given as prescribed in RCW 26.09.440 and 26.09.450.

**Sec.**  RCW 26.09.520 and 2000 c 21 s 14 are each amended to read as follows:

The person proposing to relocate with the child shall provide his or her reasons for the intended relocation. There is a rebuttable presumption that the intended relocation of the child will be permitted. A person entitled to object to the intended relocation of the child may rebut the presumption by demonstrating that the detrimental effect of the relocation outweighs the benefit of the change to the child and the relocating person, based upon the following factors. The factors listed in this section are not weighted. No inference is to be drawn from the order in which the following factors are listed:

(1) The relative strength, nature, quality, extent of involvement, and stability of the child's relationship with each parent, siblings, and other significant persons in the child's life;

(2) Prior agreements of the parties;

(3) Whether disrupting the contact between the child and the person ((~~with whom the child resides a majority of the time~~)) seeking relocation would be more detrimental to the child than disrupting contact between the child and the person objecting to the relocation;

(4) Whether either parent or a person entitled to residential time with the child is subject to limitations under RCW 26.09.191;

(5) The reasons of each person for seeking or opposing the relocation and the good faith of each of the parties in requesting or opposing the relocation;

(6) The age, developmental stage, and needs of the child, and the likely impact the relocation or its prevention will have on the child's physical, educational, and emotional development, taking into consideration any special needs of the child;

(7) The quality of life, resources, and opportunities available to the child and to the relocating party in the current and proposed geographic locations;

(8) The availability of alternative arrangements to foster and continue the child's relationship with and access to the other parent;

(9) The alternatives to relocation and whether it is feasible and desirable for the other party to relocate also;

(10) The financial impact and logistics of the relocation or its prevention; and

(11) For a temporary order, the amount of time before a final decision can be made at trial.

**Sec.**  RCW 26.09.410 and 2000 c 21 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

The definitions in this section apply throughout RCW 26.09.405 through 26.09.560 and 26.09.260 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Court order" means a temporary or permanent parenting plan, custody order, visitation order, or other order governing the residence of a child under this title.

(2) "Relocate" means a change in principal residence either permanently or for a protracted period of time, or a change in residence in cases where parents have substantially equal residential time as defined by section 1 of this act.

**--- END ---**