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**HOUSE BILL 1945**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2022 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Dent, Sutherland, Wicks, and Robertson

AN ACT Relating to improving communication between the department of children, youth, and families and caregivers; adding a new section to chapter 74.13 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW to read as follows:

The department shall develop and implement a caregiver liaison program within the department for the purpose of improving communication between the department and caregivers. The caregiver liaison program is responsible for:

(1) Assisting caseworkers in promptly communicating with caregivers of children receiving child welfare services;

(2) Developing policies for sharing appropriate and timely information with caregivers of children receiving child welfare services; and

(3) Directly communicating with caregivers of children receiving child welfare services when an individual caseworker is unable to promptly communicate due to other work demands.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) By October 1, 2022, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the department shall submit a report to the appropriate committees of the legislature and the governor describing:

(a) How the department could implement an automated notification system that would provide electronic or telephonic notifications to caregivers of children receiving child welfare services regarding upcoming changes in placements for the child, court hearings, or other relevant and appropriate information; and

(b) Any statutory, policy, or funding changes needed to accomplish the automated notification system described in (a) of this subsection.

(2) This section expires April 1, 2023.

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