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**SECOND SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6068**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2024 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Boehnke and C. Wilson)

READ FIRST TIME 02/05/24.

1 AN ACT Relating to reporting on dependency outcomes; amending RCW  
2 13.34.820; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** Dependency courts should work to ensure  
5 the well-being of dependent children and to ensure that every young  
6 person who leaves foster care has relational permanency - meaning  
7 they have various long-term relationships that help them feel loved  
8 and connected. This includes relationships with siblings, parents,  
9 family members, extended family, family friends, mentors, and where  
10 appropriate, former foster family members.

11 Legal permanency, achieved through reunification, guardianship,  
12 or adoption is important, but it is not the only way to provide a  
13 sense of belonging and meaningful connections for young people. The  
14 federal children's bureau has cautioned that, legal permanence alone  
15 does not guarantee secure attachments and lifelong relationships. The  
16 relational aspects of permanency are critically important and  
17 fundamental to overall well-being, administration on children, youth  
18 and families, information memorandum ACYF-CB-IM-20-09, January 5,  
19 2021. Relational permanency is one component of a child's overall  
20 well-being. Washington state's data collection should reflect the

1 importance of both relational and legal permanency as well as child  
2 well-being.

3 **Sec. 2.** RCW 13.34.820 and 2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 s 309 are each  
4 amended to read as follows:

5 (1) The administrative office of the courts, in consultation with  
6 the attorney general's office and the department, shall compile an  
7 annual report, providing information about cases that fail to meet  
8 statutory guidelines to achieve permanency for dependent children.

9 (2) The administrative office of the courts shall submit the  
10 annual report required by this section to appropriate committees of  
11 the legislature by December 1st of each year, beginning on December  
12 1, 2007. The administrative office of the courts shall also submit  
13 the annual report to a representative of the foster parent  
14 association of Washington state.

15 (3) The annual report shall include information regarding whether  
16 foster parents received timely notification of dependency hearings as  
17 required by RCW 13.34.096 and 13.34.145 and whether caregivers  
18 submitted reports to the court.

19 (4) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this  
20 specific purpose, the administrative office of the courts shall, in  
21 consultation with others, identify measures of relational permanency  
22 and child well-being and shall report to the legislature by July 1,  
23 2025, in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the following information:

24 (a) A plan for reporting on child well-being and relational  
25 permanency;

26 (b) A plan for tracking and reporting on whether an order or  
27 portion of an order was agreed or contested, and if contested, by  
28 which party or parties;

29 (c) How to make such information publicly available;

30 (d) What can be reported using existing data;

31 (e) What additional information should be collected; and

32 (f) What data-sharing agreements are necessary to ensure an  
33 accurate picture of the needs of families in the dependency system.

34 (5) In making these determinations the administrative office of  
35 the courts must consult with representatives who have knowledge of  
36 data collection systems from the office of the superintendent of  
37 public instruction; the health care authority; the department of  
38 children, youth, and families; the department of social and health

1 services; the department of corrections; and any other entity holding  
2 relevant data or expertise.

3 (6) Consistent with RCW 13.50.280, to collect data necessary to  
4 evaluate the relational permanency and well-being of dependent  
5 children, the administrative office of the courts shall execute data-  
6 sharing agreements with the office of the superintendent of public  
7 instruction, the health care authority, the department of children,  
8 youth, and families, the department of corrections, and the  
9 department of social and health services.

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