

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## E2SHB 2217

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**As Passed House:**

February 9, 1996

**Title:** An act relating to at-risk youth.

**Brief Description:** Changing provisions for at-risk youth.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Carrell, Mitchell, Thompson, Cooke, Boldt, Backlund and Johnson).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Children & Family Services: 1/18/96, 1/26/96 [DPS];  
Appropriations: 2/1/96, 2/3/96 [DP2S(w/o sub CFS)].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 2/9/96, 97-0.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Cooke, Chairman; Lambert, Vice Chairman; Stevens, Vice Chairman; Tokuda, Ranking Minority Member; Brown, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boldt; Buck; Carrell; Dickerson; Patterson and Sterk.

**Staff:** David Knutson (786-7146).

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Majority Report:** The second substitute bill be substituted therefor and the second substitute bill do pass and do not pass the substitute bill by Committee on Children & Family Services. Signed by 30 members: Representatives Huff, Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Pelesky, Vice Chairman; H. Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Valle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Beeksma; Brumsickle; Carlson; Chappell; Cooke; Crouse; Dellwo; Dyer; Foreman; Grant; Hargrove; Hickel; Jacobsen; Kessler; Lambert; Linville; McMorris; Poulsen; Reams; Rust; Sehlin; Sheahan; Talcott and Wolfe.

**Staff:** Beth Redfield (786-7130).

**Background:** In 1995, the Legislature enacted the Becca Bill, related to at-risk youth. The service system for runaway and at-risk youth was modified to provide for secure crisis residential center facilities to house youth. Court procedures for children in need of supervision were established. Parents were given greater authority over their children related to treatment needs and supervision. Harboring notification requirements were changed, and the failure to notify parents, law enforcement, or the Department of Social and Health Services when a youth was harbored was made a misdemeanor. The courts were granted greater authority to provide treatment and impose restrictions on habitual runaways. The Governor vetoed several provisions of the Becca Bill related to crisis residential centers, treatment for habitual runaways, parental notification requirements for chemical dependency, mental health treatment providers, and school personnel.

**Summary of Bill:** The court is authorized to place a child in need of services or an at-risk youth in a staff secure treatment facility. Violation of harboring notification requirements will be treated as a licensing violation for licensed child serving agencies. Violation of the harboring notification requirements will be a misdemeanor for other persons. School personnel must provide parents with notice of referring their children for treatment within 48 hours. Likewise, chemical dependency providers and mental health care providers must provide parents with notice of requests for treatment within 48 hours for inpatient treatment and seven days for outpatient treatment. Consistent with requirements contained in federal law, a chemical dependency provider must first obtain a child's consent before providing notice to the child's parents, unless the child does not possess the capacity to give consent. If the chemical dependency provider fails to provide notice to the child's parents within seven days, or fails to make a reasonable effort to do so, the child's parents and their insurance carrier are relieved from any obligation to reimburse the provider for the cost of treatment. Technical amendments related to social services and court procedures for at-risk youth and children in need of supervision are included.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 17, 1996.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** (Children & Family Services) Several issues related to at-risk youth and children in need of supervision must be addressed to ensure changes begun in 1995 are completed. Without the money to implement the new policies in E2SSB 5439, little will change.

(Appropriations) The bill picks up where the "Becca Law" left off, addressing the issues raised by the vetoed sections of that bill. DSHS supports the substitute bill.

**Testimony Against:** (Children & Family Services) Habitual runaways should not be locked up in order to receive treatment. Notification requirements for inpatient and outpatient treatment providers should be modified. Failing to comply with the harboring notification requirements should not be a misdemeanor for agencies serving children.

(Appropriations) Although the substitute does make the Becca Law more reasonable, it would be better to repeal the law. Youth should not be locked up; they only need to know their options and can be reasoned with.

**Testified:** (Children & Family Services) (Con) Richard Warner, Citizens Commission on Human Rights; Jennifer Strus, Department of Social and Health Services; Rachael Myers, National Association of Social Workers; Pete Berknet, Children's Alliance; (Pro) Seth Dawson, Common Ground for Children; Ruth Goode; and Brenda Jones and Jean Williams, Runaway Alliance.

(Appropriations) Rep. Mike Carrell (prime sponsor); Jennifer Strus, Children's Administration, DSHS (pro); and Kiale Staveland (pro with concerns).