

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2387

As Reported By House Committee On:

Children & Family Services

Title: An act relating to reports of abuse of children and adult dependent and developmentally disabled persons.

Brief Description: Requiring department of corrections personnel to report suspected abuse of children and adult dependent and developmentally disabled persons.

Sponsors: Representatives Cooke, Costa, Tokuda, Brown, Dellwo, Murray, Patterson, Mitchell and Silver; by request of Department of Social and Health Services and Department of Corrections.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 1/26/96, 1/30/96 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: 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: Douglas Ruth (786-7134).

Background: Certain professionals are required by law to report incidents of abuse or neglect of children, dependent adults, or the developmentally disabled when there is reasonable cause to believe abuse or neglect has occurred. These professionals include police officers, nurses, social service counselors, psychologists, pharmacists, licensed child care providers, juvenile probation officers, and Department of Social and Health Services employees. A report must be made whether the professional became aware of the possible abuse during or outside the course of his or her employment. Professionals making good faith, truthful reports are immune from civil or criminal liability arising out of the making such reports.

Summary of Bill: Department of Corrections personnel are added to the list of professionals who are required to report incidents of abuse or neglect of children or developmentally disabled persons.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Adding Department of Corrections personnel to the list of mandatory reporters will create a further protection against unchecked child abuse.

Testimony Against: The reporting requirement should be limited to abuse or neglect observed in the course of Department of Correction personnel's employment.

Testified: (Pro) Rosie Oreskovka, Department of Corrections; Victoria Roberts, Department of Corrections; (Con) Jane Jorgensen, Washington Federation of State Employees; and (suggested revisions) Cherie R. Tessier, People First of Washington.