

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2487

As Reported By House Committee On:

Children & Family Services

Title: An act relating to continuing adoption support payments.

Brief Description: Continuing adoption support payments.

Sponsors: Representatives Tokuda, Buck, Veloria, Carrell, Lambert, Mason, Romero, Honeyford, Dickerson, Murray, Boldt, Hymes, Chopp, Sheldon, Costa, Conway, Cooke and Kessler.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 1/25/96, 2/1/96 [DPS].

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).

Background: The Department of Social and Health Services provides continuing payments or lump sum payments of adoption support to families who adopt hard to place children. The secretary of the department is authorized to set the amount of a payment or the initial amount of continuing payments.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Continuing adoption support payments may be set at an amount sufficient to ensure timely adoptions of children in foster care. Adoption support payments made on or after July 1, 1996, will be set at a level designed to facilitate timely adoptions.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Adoption support payments under this act do not apply retroactively to current recipients of adoption support payments. The secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services is authorized to set

adoption support payments at a level sufficient to facilitate adoptions at the earliest possible date.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 1, 1996.

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

Testimony For: Children living in foster care who are legally free for adoption should be placed in adoptive homes as soon as possible. Adoption support payments should be set at a level appropriate to facilitate adoptions for children with special needs who are living in foster care. Passage of this legislation will reduce foster care caseloads.

Testimony Against: The Department of Social and Health Services is unsure of the cost of this proposal. If it applies to the current caseload, it could have a significant fiscal impact.

Testified: (Pro) Teresita Frisbee, Foster Parents Washington Assembly; Patty Scheler, adoptive and foster parent; Vicky McKinney, adoptive parent; Delinda McCann, foster parent; Ann Waller, adoptive parent; Rebecca Perlsiy, Children's Home Society; Paola Maranan, Children's Alliance; Tina Dwiggen, Coalition of Parents of Children with Disabilities; Judy Chinn, United Grandparents Raising Grandchildren; Kathy Parr, parent; and (with concerns) Lois Chowen, Department of Social and Health Services.