

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2662

As Reported By House Committee On:
Children & Family Services

Title: An act relating to education in the recognition of symptoms of drug and alcohol dependency in patients.

Brief Description: Providing for education in the recognition of symptoms of drug and alcohol dependency in patients.

Sponsors: Representatives Patterson, Cooke, Tokuda, Dickerson, Stevens, Boldt, Lambert, Carrell, Brown, Chopp and Costa.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

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

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Cooke, Chairman; Lambert, Vice Chairman; Tokuda, Ranking Minority Member; Brown, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boldt; Buck; Carrell; Dickerson; Patterson and Sterk.

Staff: David Knutson (786-7146).

Background: A high percentage of cases involving child abuse and neglect and dependent children involve alcohol or drug abuse by a parent. Children's services caseworkers employed by the Department of Social and Health Services do not receive training to help them recognize the symptoms of drug or alcohol dependency. The failure of a caseworker to recognize these symptoms may place children in dangerous situations.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Department of Social and Health Services' caseworkers will receive training to help them recognize the symptoms of drug and alcohol dependency in department clients.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Occupations and professions regulated under the Uniform Disciplinary Act will not have to attend continuing education training on recognizing alcohol and substance abuse symptoms. The requirement that

caseworkers be trained to recognize symptoms of alcohol and substance abuse in patients in clinical settings is changed to focus on department clients and parents or adult caretakers of children in state care.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Caseworkers need additional training to recognize the symptoms of alcohol and chemical dependency in parents when dealing with abuse, neglect, and dependency cases.

Testimony Against: None .

Testified: (Pro) Ken Stark, Department of Social and Health Services/Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse; Lisa Thatcher, Washington State Nurses Association; Ruth Kagi,citizen; and Judy Turpin, Childhaven.