

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5800

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**As Reported By House Committee On:**  
Appropriations

**Title:** An act relating to developmental disabilities.

**Brief Description:** Recognizing that financial savings from efficiencies in the developmental disabilities program should be redirected within the program for community-based services.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators McDonald, Wojahn, Cantu, West, Rinehart, Pelz and Bauer).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Appropriations: 4/3/95 [DPA].

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 26 members: Representatives Silver, Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Huff, Vice Chairman; Pelesky, Vice Chairman; Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Brumsickle; Carlson; Chappell; Cooke; Crouse; Dellwo; G. Fisher; Foreman; Grant; Hickel; Jacobsen; Lambert; Lisk; McMorris; Poulsen; Rust; Sehlin; Sheahan; Talcott; Thibaudeau and Wolfe.

**Minority Report:** Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Hargrove.

**Staff:** John Woolley (786-7154).

**Background:** The Division of Developmental Disabilities in the Department of Social and Health Services will serve an average of about 11,500 children and adults each month this biennium, with a total state and federal budget of \$646 million. About 1,400 people will be served in one of the five state-operated institutions, or Residential Habilitation Centers, at a cost of \$303 million. The other 10,000 people will receive residential, employment, day activity, respite care, or other community support services at a cost of about \$336 million.

After controlling for inflation, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) budget has increased by \$278 million since the 1983-85 biennium, or by about 75

percent. The number of persons receiving DDD services increased by 50 percent during this same 10 year period.

Despite these increases, many advocacy groups argue that there are many people eligible for services who do not receive any services or do not receive the level of services they require.

During the decade prior to the 1993-95 biennium, there were very few program reductions or efficiencies in developmental disabilities. In 1993-95, there were approximately \$42 million of state general fund state reductions and efficiencies, which were balanced by \$44 million of state general fund cost increases. However, only about \$20 million of those increases were to provide community services for additional people: the balance went to covering the carry-forward costs of 1991-93 salary and vendor rate increases.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** It is the intent of the Legislature that any financial savings from reductions and efficiencies in the DDD budget be redirected to provide public or private community services for persons who otherwise do not receive them.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** Unidentified persons are added to the group of people who will be getting services should financial savings be realized in the developmental disabilities program. In addition, language is changed to specify that legislative intent is that savings "should" be redirected within the program rather than "shall" be redirected within the program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** This is not a partisan issue. The bill simply takes money in the budget and uses it for more cost effective services. The bill makes good economic sense and deserves support. It is important to the many families who are not currently getting services. The people who support the bill are proud that it passed the Senate unanimously. The bill can be made better by adding family preservation services to its language. While there are savings to be had in the DD program, an amendment is requested which disassociates savings from Resident Habilitation Center (RHC's) closures.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Senator Dan McDonald, prime sponsor; Cheryl Marshall, Washington Assembly; Cherie Tessier, People First of Washington; Margaret Lee Thompson, Parent Coalition of King County; Dave Wood, Action for Residential Habilitation Centers; Sue Roberts, Parent Coalition of Spokane; and Thomas Winslow, Multicultural Coalition on Disabilities.