

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1882

As Reported By House Committee On:
Children & Family Services
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to an inspector general.

Brief Description: Creating the position of inspector general in the Washington state patrol.

Sponsors: Representatives Stevens and Boldt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 2/21/95, 2/28/95 [DPS];

Appropriations: 3/4/95 [DP2S(w/o sub CFS)].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Cooke, Chairman; Lambert, Vice Chairman; Stevens, Vice Chairman; Boldt; Buck; Carrell; Padden and Tokuda.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Thibaudeau, Ranking Minority Member; Brown, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; and Patterson.

Staff: David Knutson (786-7146).

Background: Complaints regarding the manner in which the Department of Social and Health Services conducts child abuse and neglect investigations and interacts with families are often made to the department. The department is required to use an informal, nonadversarial complaint resolution process to respond to complaints. Citizens with complaints against the Department of Social and Health Services are often distrustful of a complaint resolution process controlled by the department.

Summary of Substitute Bill: An Inspector General is created in the Washington State Patrol. The Inspector General will provide oversight of the Department of Social and Health Services with particular emphasis on allegations of improper family intervention and other improper action or coercion by the department.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The chief of the Washington State Patrol is given greater flexibility in choosing an Inspector General. The Inspector General is required to receive training on child abuse and neglect within six months of appointment. The Inspector General position and function will expire on July 1, 1997.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The Washington State Patrol is a good organizational choice for an Inspector General to investigate the Department of Social and Health Services.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Thomas Sharkey (pro); Donna Becraft, Parents Educating Parents (pro); Reverend Jerry and Brenda Ruland, J. & B. Ministries (pro); Rebecca Mustard, Parents Educating Parents (pro); Deni Mathiesen (pro), Rita Drohman, citizen (pro) and Tim Ericksen, Washington State Patrol (pro).

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 18 members: Representatives Silver, Chairman; Huff, Vice Chairman; Pelesky, Vice Chairman; Beeksma; Brumsickle; Chappell; Cooke; Crouse; Foreman; Grant; Hargrove; Hickel; Lambert; Lisk; McMorris; Reams; Sheahan and Talcott.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Valle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Carlson; G. Fisher; Jacobsen; Poulsen; Rust; Thibaudeau and Wolfe.

Staff: Jim Lux (786-7152).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee on Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee on Children & Family Services: A null and void clause is added to the substitute bill so that if funding in the budget is not provided, the provisions of the bill do not take effect.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: None.