

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5421

As Passed House - Amended:

April 6, 1995

Title: An act relating to background checks.

Brief Description: Modifying the definition of "vulnerable adult" for background check purposes.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senator Fraser).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 3/28/95, 3/31/95 [DPA].

Floor Activity:

Amended.

Passed House: 4/6/95, 95-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Cooke, Chairman; Lambert, Vice Chairman; Stevens, Vice Chairman; Thibaudeau, Ranking Minority Member; Brown, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boldt; Buck; Carrell; Patterson and Tokuda.

Staff: David Knutson (786-7146).

Background: All prospective employees and certain volunteers of businesses, organizations, and governmental agencies are subject to background checks if they will have responsibility for the education, training, treatment, supervision, housing, or recreational activities of vulnerable adults.

A vulnerable adult is currently defined as a person 60 years old or older who does not have the functional, mental or physical ability to care for him or herself, or a person who is a patient in a state mental hospital.

Summary of Bill: For the purposes of requesting and receiving background checks, the definition of a vulnerable adult is expanded to include all individuals, regardless of age, who lack the functional, mental, or physical ability to care for themselves.

The Washington State Patrol (WSP) is authorized to disclose the results of a background check directly to a developmentally disabled person or a vulnerable adult or their guardian upon their request.

"Criminal abandonment" is added to the list of crimes against children or other persons that must be reported by the WSP as part of the background check.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Many vulnerable people under age 60 hire people to care for them. They should be able to request a background check prior to deciding whether to hire a person.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Karen Fraser, prime sponsor.