

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6717

As of February 27, 1996

Title: An act relating to Fircrest school.

Brief Description: Creating the Fircrest school planning board.

Sponsors: Senators Thibaudeau and Roach.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 3/1/96.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Staff: Andrea McNamara (786-7483)

Background: Fircrest is comprised of approximately 90 acres located in the north end of King County. Slightly over half of the property is either owned by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) or leased by DSHS from the Charitable, Educational, Penal, & Reformatory Institution Account (CEP & RI Account) managed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Under current law, DNR is directed to manage all properties in the CEP & RI Account for the trust beneficiaries, which include persons who are mentally ill or developmentally disabled. Proceeds from leases, sales, or exchanges of property held in the account are deposited in the account, and the Legislature is required to give priority consideration to appropriating one-half the money generated from the lease income to providing community housing for the trust beneficiaries.

Fircrest School for the developmentally disabled is operated by DSHS on that portion of the property leased from DNR. Because the lease is from one state agency to another, it does not generate profit for the CEP & RI Account.

The school currently serves approximately 375 individuals with developmental disabilities. Most of the residents are long-term clients who live in a variety of settings including six complete care nursing facilities and a number of cottage-style group homes, duplexes, and semi-independent apartments. The school grounds also contain a number of program buildings as well as an administration and maintenance buildings.

In addition to the property leased by DSHS for Fircrest School, DSHS also owns property adjacent to the school campus. DSHS leases this property to a number of public and private agencies for a variety of purposes including, for example, the Washington State Patrol, a King County minimum security rehabilitation facility, a state health laboratory, a private, nonprofit food bank, and sheltered workshops.

It has been suggested that a separate planning board and account specifically for the Fircrest properties would improve the management and income-generating potential of those properties.

Summary of Bill: A Fircrest planning board is created to produce a plan for the enhancement and development of the Fircrest school properties. The membership and duties of the board are specified.

The board membership includes 11 representatives appointed by the Governor, including (1) the Superintendent of Fircrest; one representative each (2) from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS); (3) from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR); (4) from the city of Shoreline; (5) from King County government; (6) from the Shoreline school district; (7) from citizens with developmental disabilities; (8) from Fircrest residents or their legal guardians; (9) who provides or receives community-based services for developmental disabilities; (10) from neighborhoods adjacent to Fircrest; (11) from labor organizations at Fircrest.

The plan must be developed by the board in consultation with affected agencies, neighborhoods, and real estate marketing specialists. It may include several alternatives but must include an architectural plan for appropriate construction and supporting environmental analysis.

The plan must be submitted with a report to the Legislature during the 1997 session. DSHS is authorized to begin implementing the plan by April, 1997, unless the plan is amended or disapproved by the Legislature.

Reviews of the Board are scheduled for 1998 and 2000 by the State Auditor and the Legislative Budget Committee, and a sunset review is included terminating the board and its duties on June 30, 2000.

DSHS is exempt from the requirements of the Charitable, Educational, Penal, & Reformatory Institution Account (CEP & RI Account) in managing the Fircrest properties. A new account, the developmental disabilities assistance account, is established in the state treasury for the income generated by the lease or exchange of real property at Fircrest. This account is to be utilized for the benefit of all state citizens with developmental disabilities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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