

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 1137

Title: *An act relating to the confidentiality of child welfare records.*

Brief Description: *Protecting child records.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Tokuda and Murray; by request of Governor Lowry.*

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Meeting Date: *February 6, 1997.*

Bill Analysis Prepared by: *David Knutson (786-7146).*

Background: *The Department of Social and Health Services does not typically provide information to the public about individual cases involving the abuse or neglect of children.*

Summary of Bill: *The secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services is authorized to release information related to the abuse or neglect of children if it is not contrary to the best interests of the child, and with the following provisions: the alleged perpetrator is accused of a crime; or the investigation has been publically disclosed by law enforcement, a prosecuting attorney, other investigative agencies, or a judge; or the subject of the child abuse investigation has made a knowing, voluntary public disclosure concerning the investigation. The secretary may release the name of the child, the department's determination involving the child abuse report, services provided and actions taken by the department, or any other information involving the abuse or neglect of a child.*

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Not requested.*

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