

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 5578

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C 146 L 97

Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning the placement and custody of at-risk youth.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Long, Hargrove and Winsley; by request of Department of Social and Health Services).

**Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections**  
**House Committee on Children & Family Services**

**Background:** In the past two legislative sessions, the Legislature passed two major bills concerning treatment and processes for assisting at-risk and runaway youth. Those bills are known as the Becca Bill and Becca Too.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) has suggested various technical and clarifying amendments to the Becca bills.

When a law enforcement officer takes a child into custody, the officer must take the child to the parents, a crisis residential center (CRC), or DSHS. Upon the parent's request, the officer may take the child to a family member, responsible adult, CRC, DSHS, or a licensed youth shelter.

If no parent is available or willing to remove a child from a CRC within five days, DSHS must consider filing a child in need of services (CHINS) petition.

In a CHINS proceeding, the court may order the department to submit a dispositional plan that addresses the needs of the child.

**Summary:** A definition for a "staff secure" group care facility is created. The facility has a staffing ratio of one adult to every two children.

After an officer brings a child to DSHS, the department may place the child in a CRC or out-of-home placement for up to 72 hours, excluding weekends and holidays. The department must consider filing a CHINS petition for a child if no parent has taken the child from a CRC within the first 72 hours.

In a CHINS proceeding, the court may order a dispositional plan to be prepared that addresses the needs of the child. The plan must address the needs of the parents if the parents agree or if an out-of-home placement has been ordered at the request of the child or department, otherwise the plan may only recommend voluntary services for the parents.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate 47 0

House 98 0

**Effective:** July 27, 1997