

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6551

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Government Operations, February 6, 1998

**Title:** An act relating to siting of boarding and adult family homes.

**Brief Description:** Providing a process to site boarding homes and adult family homes in cities.

**Sponsors:** Senators Horn, McCaslin, Deccio, Prentice and Haugen.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations: 2/5/98, 2/6/98 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6551 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chair; Hale, Vice Chair; Haugen, Horn and T. Sheldon.

**Staff:** Diane Smith (786-7410)

**Background:** There is little coordination between the state agency responsible for licensing a group home and the city wherein the home is proposed to be located.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The Department of Health, in the case of boarding homes, and the Department of Social and Health Services, in the case of adult family homes, must notify the city within which the home is proposed to be licensed. The applicant, city and appropriate department must attempt to reach agreement as to the mutual accommodations necessary to ameliorate the impacts, if any, of the operation of the home. If agreement cannot be reached, the department must prepare a memorandum explaining why the license was granted for the chosen location.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The substitute bill refines the language of the original bill, substituting other language for siting— the homes and justifying— the choice of location.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** The notification requirement opens needed dialogue between the home and the community which will lead to understanding and acceptance of the home. This bill is a first step for communities to know high-risk citizens may be needing emergency medical care. These homes are businesses, not families.

**Testimony Against:** This bill would not address the Oxford House issue. It is not needed for boarding homes because they must comply with local zoning requirements under current regulations and because boarding homes are large facilities that employ hundreds of people. Residents of adult family homes have the right to live in residential neighborhoods and the right not to be subject to more or different requirements than any other family. Parking plans are already required and the fact of licensure is already a public record. DSHS is too busy to be required to infuse itself into local zoning matters. The memorandum is inappropriate and siting— does not fit the circumstances of an existing structure’s conversion to a group home.

**Testified:** PRO: Chuck Mosher; Karen Reed; Barbara Fahey, City of Edmonds; CON: Sherm Cox, Byron Plan, DOH; Tom Stanley, NW Assisted Living Facilities; Kathy Leitch, WSRCC; Bill Day, AFHA; Scott Sigmon, WA Health Care Association.