

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 1868

Title: *An act relating to residential placement and transitional living services for youth; amending RCW 74.15.020; reenacting and amending RCW 13.34.130 and 13.34 .145; adding new sections to chapter 74.13 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 13.60 RCW; adding new sections to chapter 28B.80 RCW; and creating new sections.*

Brief Description: *Providing residential placement and transitional living services to street youth.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Kagi, Carrell, Lambert, Tokuda, Boldt, Lovick, Barlean, McIntire, O'Brien, Edwards, Edmonds, Rockefeller, Kessler, Wolfe, Murray, Santos, Conway, Keiser, Ogden, Kenney, Wood, Hurst and Stensen.*

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Meeting Date: *February 18, 1999.*

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

Background: Many children who live on the streets do not have families they can be reunited with. Residential placements for these children are limited. Crisis residential centers are available as short-term placements, but after five days if the child does not return home, they may again find themselves on the street. Some older adolescents, who have been found dependent by the court, are not appropriate for a foster home placement. There is currently no service for older adolescents who require assistance in developing life skills in a safe environment prior to reaching the age of majority.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Social and Health Services will contract for the establishment of HOPE centers in communities across the State. Street youth may be served in a HOPE center for up to thirty days. The Department will also contract for placement and liaison specialists in each community served by a HOPE center. The placement and liaison specialists will conduct assessment of street youth staying in HOPE centers, facilitate the street youth's return to their family or to a licensed residential agency, provide outreach services, and arrange education assessments.

The Department will also establish responsible living skills programs in communities across the State. These programs will be available to youth between the ages of sixteen and eighteen who are unable to live at home, in a licensed agency, or are currently living in an unsafe location. Services available through these programs will include educational services, assistance and counseling related to vocational training

or higher education, counseling and training in various life skills, and individual and group counseling.

The Department of Social and Health Services will develop a procedure for obtaining missing children information from the missing children clearinghouse and disseminating the information to placement and liaison specialists, crisis residential center staff, and HOPE center staff.

Former street youth who have been residents of a HOPE center and a transitional living service program are eligible to receive educational financial assistance to attend an institution of higher education in Washington. A tax credit is authorized equal to one hundred percent of the amounts donated to the HOPE educational assistance account. The tax credit applies to business and occupation taxes and public utility taxes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: None.

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