

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

SSB 5279

Title: *An act relating to placement of children in mental health care by the department of social and health services; adding new sections to chapter 13.34 RCW: and creating a new section.*

Brief Description: *Regulating the placement of children in mental health treatment by the department of social and health services.*

Sponsors: *Senators Kohl-Welles, Hargrove, Long, Fairley, Prentice and Winsley.*

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Meeting Date: *March 24, 1999.*

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

Background: *The placement of a child into a mental health treatment facility is governed by the provisions on Chapter 71.34 RCW. A concern has been raised that children in the custody of the Department of Social and Health Services may be placed in out of state mental health facilities without parental consent.*

Summary of Bill: *Children under the jurisdiction of the Department of Social and Health Services who are a dependent child, an at-risk youth or child in need of services, or a subject of a child abuse and neglect investigation may be admitted to a mental health facility if the secretary finds by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence that five specific criteria are met. When a dependent child is removed from their home, parental consent to placement in a mental health facility is required or the placement must be ordered by the court after notice to the parents and a court hearing.*

The Department of Social and Health Services must provide records needed for treatment to the treating physicians.

The Department of Social and Health Services must maintain a list of all mental health facilities to which minor dependent children may be admitted.

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *None.*

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