

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1619

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Human Services & Corrections, April 1, 1999  
Ways & Means, April 5, 1999

**Title:** An act relating to foster parents.

**Brief Description:** Changing the liability insurance of foster parents.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives McDonald, Kagi, Boldt, Lovick, Tokuda, Wood, Clements, Carrell, D. Schmidt, Linville, Dickerson, O'Brien, Mielke, Kenney and Haigh).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Human Services & Corrections: 3/30/99, 4/1/99 [DP-WM].  
Ways & Means: 4/5/99 [DPA].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Costa, Vice Chair; Franklin, Kohl-Welles, Long, Patterson, Sheahan, Stevens and Zarelli.

**Staff:** Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Loveland, Chair; Bauer, Vice Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Fairley, Fraser, Honeyford, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Long, McDonald, Rasmussen, Rossi, B. Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, West, Winsley, Wojahn and Zarelli.

**Staff:** Risa Sandler (786-7708)

**Background:** Foster parents experience violent and aggressive behavior from foster children who are acting out. Their homes are damaged and require repairs. Insurance typically covers the depreciated value of the property damaged, rather than replacement costs.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** An intent is declared to provide additional assistance to families willing to serve as foster parents.

Within available funds and subject to conditions and limitations established by the Department of Social and Health Services or by the Legislature through the Omnibus Appropriations Act, the department must reimburse foster parents for property damaged or destroyed by foster children. The department must establish a maximum reimbursement for

each occurrence, based on replacement value. For those families who have insurance, the department pays the deductible, up to the limit per occurrence as established by the department.

The act is null and void if not funded by June 30, 1999, and takes effect July 1, 1999.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** Language regarding funding the legislation within available funds and subject to limits established by the department or by the Legislature through the appropriations act is added.

It is also clarified that the department reimburse families for their insurance deductibles, up to the limit per occurrence that is established by the department.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 1999.

**Testimony For (Human Services & Corrections):** Foster parenting results in damages to the parents' home particularly in cases where the child has behavioral problems. Better support is needed of foster parents to ensure their availability as a necessary resource.

**Testimony Against (Human Services & Corrections):** None.

**Testified (Human Services & Corrections):** PRO: Darlene Flowers, Foster Parents Assn. of WA State; Laurie Lippold, CHSW; Joseph Edwards, Grays Harbor Foster Parents Association.

**Testimony For (Ways & Means):** Foster families are not foster parents due to financial incentives. After foster children begin to feel comfortable with their foster family placements, they may begin to act out. Reimbursement to foster parents for replacement value of property damage done by foster children, rather than depreciated value, would be appreciated. This legislation is one way to demonstrate support for foster parents.

**Testimony Against (Ways & Means):** None.

**Testified (Ways & Means):** PRO: Barb Fenster, Recruitment Resources for Kids; Laurie Lippold, Children's Home Society.