

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6362

As Passed Senate, February 11, 2000

Title: An act relating to making decisions about the removal and placement of foster children.

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to the removal and placement of foster children.

Sponsors: Senators Zarelli, Hargrove, Honeyford, Hochstatter, Johnson, Swecker and Stevens.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 1/27/2000, 2/1/2000 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/11/2000, 45-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Jennifer Strus (786-7484)

Background: There have been recent cases involving allegations of abuse or neglect against foster parents in which the department decided to remove a child from the foster home. In several cases, the Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) and the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS), both of which are in the Children's Administration, did not agree on whether the children should be removed as a result of the founded allegation against the foster parents. In addition, it has not always been clear what standard is used by the department when making the decision about whether or not to remove a child from a foster home when there are allegations of abuse or neglect.

The Governor's Executive Order 96-03, which created the Division of Licensed Resources, states that DLR shall have primary responsibility for the recruitment of foster homes. Recruitment remains a primary responsibility of DCFS.

Summary of Bill: The Division of Licensed Resources has the primary responsibility for recruitment of foster homes.

The standard to be used by the department in determining whether a child should be removed from a foster home when there is a founded allegation of abuse or neglect is whether the child's health and safety would be jeopardized if left in the home and whether removal is in the child's best interests. DCFS has the responsibility for deciding whether or not the child should be removed from the foster home.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: The language of the bill is in conflict with the Governor's executive order that created the Division of Licencing Resources.

Testified: CON: Jake Romo, Barbara Stone, Department of Social and Health Services.