

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## 2SHB 1249

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Regarding the quality of foster care services.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Kagi, Boldt, Ballasiotes, Tokuda, Dickerson, Gombosky, Darneille, Morell, Anderson, Schual-Berke, Esser, McIntire, Doumit, Kenney, Clements, Edwards, Fromhold, Miloscia, Barlean, Talcott, Ruderman, Conway, Kessler, Ogden, Lovick, D. Schmidt, O'Brien, Edmonds, Wood and Haigh).

**House Committee on Children & Family Services**

**House Committee on Appropriations**

**Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections**

### **Background:**

The Children's Administration of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) served over 19,000 children in out-of-home care during fiscal year 2000. Over 6,300 licensed foster homes were available to serve the majority of these children.

A 1999 Foster Care Task Force identified a number of priorities for improving the foster care system. Foster care rates, assessments for children entering foster care, and foster parent recruitment and retention were identified as priorities for immediate action. Restructured rates are being implemented and assessment improvement efforts are underway. Recruitment and retention efforts are ongoing.

Illinois and Oklahoma have achieved accreditation for their child welfare programs, including foster care, by a nationally recognized evaluation entity. The Vancouver office of the Division of Child and Family Services is in the process of pursuing accreditation. Accreditation involves self-evaluation and evaluation by an outside entity against performance standards developed nationally.

### **Summary:**

The Legislature finds that accreditation of children's services improves the quality of services to the children and families. The DSHS is required to undertake accreditation of children's services with the goal of completing the process by July 2006. The department and accrediting entity are required to report annually on progress toward achieving accreditation.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House 94 0

Senate 47 0 (Senate amended)

House (House refused to concur)

Senate 46 0 (Senate amended)

House 90 0 (House concurred)

**Effective:** July 22, 2001