

Judiciary Committee

SB 5591

Title: An act relating to a jury duty exemption for sole caregivers.

Brief Description: Providing a sole caregiver jury duty exemption.

Sponsors: By Senators Zarelli, Kline, Costa, McCaslin and Kohl-Welles.

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Requires the court, under certain circumstances, to excuse a person from jury service if the person is the sole caregiver for a child or dependent person.*

Hearing Date: 3/16/01

Staff: Trudes Hutcheson (786-7384).

Background:

A person summoned by a court for jury duty is required to be available for up to one month to report for jury service. The one-month on-call period is known as the "jury term." During that one-month jury term, the person may be required to be present at the court facility for jury service. Generally, the period for which a person is required to be present at the court facility may not extend beyond the end of the one-month jury term and may not exceed two weeks.

The language of the statute dealing with juries provides the court broad discretion to excuse a person from jury service. A person may be excused from jury service if there is a showing of undue hardship, extreme inconvenience, public necessity, or any other reason deemed sufficient by the court.

Summary of Bill:

Unless the public need outweighs the individual circumstances of the person summoned, the court must excuse a person from jury service if the person requests to be excused and the person: (a) is the sole caregiver for a child or other dependent during the court's

normal hours of operation; (b) is unable to afford day care or make other arrangements; and (c) personally attends to the dependent during the court's normal hours of operation.

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Not Requested.*

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