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**SENATE BILL 5583**

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**State of Washington**

**57th Legislature**

**2001 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Long, Hargrove, Stevens, Costa, Carlson, Hewitt, Kohl-Welles, Franklin, Kastama, Winsley and Regala

Read first time 01/26/2001. Referred to Committee on Human Services & Corrections.

1 AN ACT Relating to the implementation of recommendations of the  
2 joint legislative audit and review committee's performance audit of the  
3 public mental health system; amending RCW 71.24.015; creating new  
4 sections; and declaring an emergency.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature affirms its support for  
7 those recommendations of the performance audit of the public mental  
8 health system conducted by the joint legislative audit and review  
9 committee relating to: Improving the coordination of services for  
10 clients with multiple needs; improving the consistency of client,  
11 service, and fiscal data collected by the mental health division;  
12 replacing process-oriented accountability activities with a uniform  
13 statewide outcome measurement system; and using outcome information to  
14 identify and provide incentives for best practices in the provision of  
15 public mental health services.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The legislature supports recommendations 1  
17 through 10 and 12 through 14 of the mental health system performance  
18 audit conducted by the joint legislative audit and review committee.

1 The legislature expects the department of social and health services to  
2 work diligently to implement these recommendations.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** In addition to any follow-up requirements  
4 prescribed by the joint legislative audit and review committee, the  
5 department of social and health services shall submit reports to the  
6 legislature on the status of the implementation of recommendations 1  
7 through 10 and 12 through 14 of the performance audit report. The  
8 implementation status reports must be submitted to appropriate policy  
9 and fiscal committees of the legislature by June 1, 2001, and each year  
10 thereafter through 2004.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The initial implementation status reports  
12 must discuss the status of implementing recommendations 1 through 8,  
13 which are due to be implemented by June 2001, and must also include a  
14 plan for implementing recommendations 9, 10, and 12 through 14, which  
15 are due to be implemented subsequent to June 2001. The initial  
16 implementation status report must also discuss what actions the  
17 department of social and health services has taken and will take in the  
18 future in response to recommendation 11 of the performance audit  
19 report.

20 **Sec. 5.** RCW 71.24.015 and 1999 c 214 s 7 are each amended to read  
21 as follows:

22 It is the intent of the legislature to establish a community mental  
23 health program which shall help people experiencing mental illness to  
24 retain a respected and productive position in the community. This will  
25 be accomplished through programs which provide for:

26 (1) Access to mental health services for adults of the state who  
27 are acutely mentally ill, chronically mentally ill, or seriously  
28 disturbed and children of the state who are acutely mentally ill,  
29 severely emotionally disturbed, or seriously disturbed, which services  
30 recognize the special needs of underserved populations, including  
31 minorities, children, the elderly, disabled, and low-income persons.  
32 Access to mental health services shall not be limited by a person's  
33 history of confinement in a state, federal, or local correctional  
34 facility. It is also the purpose of this chapter to promote the early  
35 identification of mentally ill children and to ensure that they receive  
36 the mental health care and treatment which is appropriate to their

1 developmental level. This care should improve home, school, and  
2 community functioning, maintain children in a safe and nurturing home  
3 environment, and should enable treatment decisions to be made in  
4 response to clinical needs in accordance with sound professional  
5 judgment while also recognizing parents' rights to participate in  
6 treatment decisions for their children;

7 (2) Accountability of efficient and effective services through  
8 statewide standards for monitoring and reporting of client and system  
9 outcome information;

10 (3) Minimum service delivery standards;

11 (4) Priorities for the use of available resources for the care of  
12 the mentally ill;

13 (5) Coordination of services within the department, including those  
14 divisions within the department that provide services to children,  
15 between the department and the office of the superintendent of public  
16 instruction, and among state mental hospitals, county authorities,  
17 community mental health services, and other support services, which  
18 shall to the maximum extent feasible also include the families of the  
19 mentally ill, and other service providers; and

20 (6) Coordination of services aimed at reducing duplication in  
21 service delivery and promoting complementary services among all  
22 entities that provide mental health services to adults and children.

23 It is the policy of the state to encourage the provision of a full  
24 range of treatment and rehabilitation services in the state for mental  
25 disorders. The legislature intends to encourage the development of  
26 county-based and county-managed mental health services with adequate  
27 local flexibility to assure eligible people in need of care access to  
28 the least-restrictive treatment alternative appropriate to their needs,  
29 and the availability of treatment components to assure continuity of  
30 care. To this end, counties are encouraged to enter into joint  
31 operating agreements with other counties to form regional systems of  
32 care which integrate planning, administration, and service delivery  
33 duties assigned to counties under chapters 71.05 and 71.24 RCW to  
34 consolidate administration, reduce administrative layering, and reduce  
35 administrative costs.

36 It is further the intent of the legislature to integrate the  
37 provision of services to provide continuity of care through all phases  
38 of treatment. To this end the legislature intends to promote active

1 engagement with mentally ill persons and collaboration between families  
2 and service providers.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
4 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the  
5 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect  
6 immediately.

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