

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1858

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As of March 21, 2011

**Title:** An act relating to the department of social and health services' authority with regard to semi-secure and secure crisis residential centers and HOPE centers.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the department of social and health services' authority with regard to semi-secure and secure crisis residential centers and HOPE centers.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Early Learning & Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Roberts, Parker, Kagi, Dickerson, Goodman, Lytton, Jacks, Probst, Walsh, Carlyle, Kenney and Ormsby).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/04/11, 97-0.

**Committee Activity:** Human Services & Corrections: 3/18/11.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

**Staff:** Jennifer Strus (786-7316)

**Background:** The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) contracts with vendors who provide a variety of residential programs specific to older youth in crisis who need shelter and assistance. These residential options include the following:

- secure and semi-secure crisis residential centers (CRCs);
- HOPE centers; and
- Responsible Living Skills Programs.

Separate rules govern each program. Some providers operate more than one program within one physical facility. CRCs have existed in Washington since 1980 to serve youth who are homeless, those who seek shelter including runaway youth, and those transported by law enforcement or DSHS. CRCs consist of both semi-secure and secure facilities. Secure CRCs were established in 1995 and are designed to prevent youth from leaving the facility without parental or staff permission for a short period of time while they receive support to stabilize during a period of crisis. Secure CRCs include some facilities located within or adjacent to a juvenile detention facility, but do not allow for in-person contact between youth in the CRC and juveniles being held in the detention facility. Some secure CRCs are community-based.

In 1999 the Legislature passed the HOPE Act, which established services for older street youth without family support and for whom foster placements have not been successful.

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HOPE centers are facilities where youth can stay for up to 30 days while they are evaluated for services.

The Responsible Living Skills Program provides long-term residential placement for older youth and other services to help youth gain independent living skills.

**Summary of Bill:** DSHS must allow co-location of secure and semi-secure CRCs and HOPE centers, and must adopt rules to allow for the licensing of these co-located facilities. Youth in co-located facilities may not be placed in secure facilities, except as authorized in statute. DSHS must contract for a continuum of short-term stabilization services and collaborate with service providers in a manner that allows facilities to be located in a geographically representative manner. DSHS is authorized to contract for the operation of HOPE center beds and Responsible Living Skills Programs with the goal of facilitating the coordination of services provided for youth by such programs and those provided by CRCs. DSHS is authorized to adopt rules regarding flexible payment structures, center specific licensing waivers, or other appropriate measures to increase utilization and provide flexibility, while continuing to meet the statutory goals of each program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: In this time of fiscal challenge, do not want to let beds sit empty, so this bill would help to maximize state dollars by keeping beds occupied. Spruce Street Inn has had semi-secure and secure beds collocated for the past year. They were initially concerned about the safety of the youth but not anymore. Putting the two populations together brought a balance of different youth at different developmental stages which has been an overall benefit to the youth. Some of the youth stay longer which allows Spruce a longer period of time to work with them. Although they have 19 beds they have never used more than 16 at one time. Janus runs semi-secure, secure, and HOPE centers. They are not allowed to collocate these beds, and they are never full. These beds are in different facilities, and it costs a lot to maintain extra facilities. They want to build a better integrated program and think collocation is a good idea because it will make the program work better. We need the connection to the HOPE beds because even though most youth are back with their families within three days, there are some that would be homeless without access to the HOPE beds.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Roberts, prime sponsor; Dennis Morrow, Dr. Elizabeth Makepeace, Janus Program; Lana Crawford, Pioneer Human Services, Spruce Street Inn.