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HOUSE BILL 2900

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State of Washington

54th Legislature

1996 Regular Session

By Representatives Lambert, Cooke, Clements, Buck, Benton, McMorris, Crouse, Koster, Delvin, Sherstad, D. Schmidt, Thompson, Hargrove, McMahan, Boldt, Cairnes, Carrell, Mulliken, Stevens, Hickel, Hymes, Goldsmith, Campbell, Smith and Johnson

Read first time 01/24/96. Referred to Committee on Children & Family Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to legislative oversight of the department of  
2 social and health services; adding new sections to chapter 43.20A RCW;  
3 and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that citizens of  
6 Washington state have the right to speak freely and to petition their  
7 government for redress of grievances and that government exists to  
8 ensure these rights.

9 Therefore, citizens are entitled to express their opinions and  
10 appeal to their elected representatives regarding the actions of public  
11 entities as such actions affect themselves individually or as they  
12 impact the common good without the threat of potential acts of  
13 retribution.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.20A RCW  
15 to read as follows:

16 If a client of the department testifies before a legislative  
17 committee or contacts an elected representative on a matter relating to  
18 the department, the department shall not take as a result of the

1 testimony or contact an act of retribution against the client that  
2 would adversely affect the client.

3 An employee of the department who engages in an act of retribution  
4 against a client is subject to sanctions, including immediate  
5 dismissal.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.20A RCW  
7 to read as follows:

8 If a client of the department alleges that an act of retribution  
9 has been taken against the client as a result of the client's testimony  
10 or contact, an elected representative may investigate the allegations  
11 and must have access to the files of the client with the consent of the  
12 client.

13 If a hearing on the matter is held by the legislature, the  
14 department shall fully cooperate with requests for information and  
15 shall appear before the hearing to answer questions.

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