
SENATE BILL 5287

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Senators Fraser, Long, Franklin, Hargrove, Winsley, Costa,
Thibaudeau, Prentice, Jacobsen, Carlson and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 01/17/2001. Referred to Committee on Human Services
& Corrections.

1 AN ACT Relating to study of kinship caregiver services;
2 creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that a major
5 roadblock in understanding kinship caregivers, including
6 grandparents raising grandchildren as primary caregivers, is a
7 lack of data. The legislature further finds that nationally over
8 two million children are being raised solely by their grandparents
9 or other relatives according to the 1998 United States current
10 population survey and that split-generation households are equally
11 common in central cities and in rural areas. The same survey
12 estimates that thirty-eight thousand nine hundred twenty-two
13 children in Washington lived in grandparent headed households. The
14 legislature acknowledges that kinship caregivers may be reluctant
15 to provide care, but are likely to do so because of emotional,
16 drug, mental, or alcohol problems by parents, and because the
17 caregivers do not want the children to go to a foster home and

1 that the state should encourage, not discourage, responsible
2 actions by relatives who come forward to care for the children of
3 kin.

4 The legislature intends to determine the scope of the needs and
5 concerns of kinship caregivers in Washington. The legislature
6 further intends to determine the availability of existing
7 services, the need for improved services, the need for better
8 coordination, and accessibility of those services.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The Washington state institute for public
10 policy will convene a work group to determine: The number of
11 families with relatives raising kin, the needs of the relative
12 kinship caregivers and the children being raised by them, whether
13 additional services and funding are needed, and issues regarding
14 access to services and funding sources. The work group must include
15 representatives from: The aging and adult services
16 administration, children's administration, economic services
17 administration, health and rehabilitative services administration,
18 family policy counsel, Washington counsel for the prevention of
19 child abuse and neglect, department of health, Washington State
20 University cooperative extension, and office of the family and
21 children's ombudsman.

22 The work group must solicit input from kinship caregivers;
23 county health departments; state agencies dealing with
24 developmental disabilities or mental health; public health
25 departments; child and family resource centers; private
26 organizations representing the interests of kinship caregivers;
27 kinship support groups; family support centers; the association of
28 Washington tribes; the children's home society; providers of legal
29 services to families; and any other persons or groups identified
30 by the work group that would provide helpful input.

31 The work group report must include: Identification of existing
32 funding sources, services, and networks; recommendations on how
33 existing services, funding sources, and networks can be better
34 coordinated; whether additional funding or services are needed,
35 how to best obtain them, and their cost; recommendations on what
36 training and oversight may be required; and other conclusions or

1 recommendations regarding what the state can do to aid kinship
2 caregivers.

3 The report and recommendations of the work group shall be
4 presented to the legislature not later than December 1, 2001.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act expires January 30, 2002.

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