

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

**SENATE BILL 6709**

57th Legislature  
2002 Regular Session

Passed by the Senate March 11, 2002  
YEAS 42 NAYS 0

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**President of the Senate**

Passed by the House March 8, 2002  
YEAS 96 NAYS 0

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**Speaker of the  
House of Representatives**

CERTIFICATE

I, Tony M. Cook, Secretary of the Senate of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SENATE BILL 6709** as passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on the dates hereon set forth.

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**Secretary**

Approved

FILED

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Governor of the State of Washington

Secretary of State  
State of Washington

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**SENATE BILL 6709**

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AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2002 Regular Session

**State of Washington                      57th Legislature                      2002 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Eide, Costa, Rasmussen, Thibaudeau, Prentice, Fraser, Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe, Haugen and Keiser

Read first time 01/28/2002. Referred to Committee on Human Services & Corrections.

1            AN ACT Relating to coordinated service and education planning for  
2 children in out-of-home care; creating new sections; and declaring an  
3 emergency.

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

5            NEW SECTION.        **Sec. 1.**        (1) Within existing resources, the  
6 department of social and health services, in cooperation with the  
7 office of the superintendent of public instruction, shall convene a  
8 working group to prepare a plan for the legislature which addresses  
9 educational stability and continuity for school-age children who enter  
10 into short term foster care. The working group shall be comprised of  
11 representatives from:

12            (a) The children's administration of the department of social and  
13 health services;

14            (b) The special education, transportation, and apportionment  
15 divisions of the office of the superintendent of public instruction;

16            (c) The Washington state institute for public policy;

17            (d) School districts;

18            (e) Organizations that regularly advocate for foster children;

19            (f) Foster parents; and

1 (g) Other individuals with related expertise as deemed appropriate  
2 by the working group.

3 (2)(a) The working group shall develop a plan for assuring that the  
4 best interests of the child are a primary consideration in the school  
5 placement of a child in short-term foster care. The plan must:

6 (i) Determine the current status of school placement for children  
7 placed in short-term foster care;

8 (ii) Identify options and possible funding sources from existing  
9 resources which could be made available to assure that children placed  
10 in short-term foster care are able to remain in the school where they  
11 were enrolled prior to placement;

12 (iii) Submit recommendations to the legislature by November 1,  
13 2002, to assure the best interest of the child receives primary  
14 consideration in school placement decisions.

15 (b) The plan shall be developed within existing resources.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The Nooksack Valley and Mount Vernon  
17 school districts shall implement a pilot project within existing  
18 resources to assist school-age children in foster care fewer than  
19 seventy-five days to continue attending the school where they were  
20 enrolled before entering foster care. The pilot project shall be  
21 implemented as provided in this section no later than April 30, 2002,  
22 and shall conclude June 30, 2003. Data from the pilot project shall be  
23 compiled and submitted to the working group established in section 1 of  
24 this act no later than July 30, 2002, and periodically thereafter.

25 (2) For the purposes of the pilot project in the two school  
26 districts, the department of social and health services and the school  
27 districts shall, as appropriate, undertake the following activities:

28 (a) A school-age child who enters foster care on or after April 30,  
29 2002, shall, unless it is determined to be not in the best interest of  
30 the child, continue attending the school where she or he was enrolled  
31 before entering foster care, notwithstanding the physical location of  
32 the child's principal abode. The best interest of the child  
33 determination shall be made at the seventy-two hour shelter care  
34 hearing, and reviewed at any subsequent shelter care hearing.

35 (b) The department of social and health services, the school the  
36 child was attending prior to entering foster care, and the school that  
37 serves the child's foster home shall negotiate a plan for transporting  
38 the child to the school the child was attending prior to entering

1 foster care. The department of social and health services shall not be  
2 responsible for the cost of transportation of the children in the pilot  
3 project.

4 (c) If the department of social and health services places a child  
5 in foster care, and the child does not continue to attend the school  
6 the child was attending prior to entering foster care, the department  
7 shall notify the school about the change.

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

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