

1233-S

Sponsor(s): House Committee on Children & Family Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Pettigrew, Boldt, Moeller, Kagi, Lovick, Orcutt, Dickerson, Chase, Darneille, Eickmeyer, O'Brien, Roach, Armstrong, Flannigan, Jarrett, Clibborn, Lantz, Kenney, Benson, Shabro, Nixon, Morrell, Mielke and Haigh)

Brief Description: Improving services for kinship caregivers.

HB 1233-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Declares that, for the purposes of this act, "kin" means persons eighteen years of age or older to whom the child is related by blood, adoption, or marriage, including marriages that have been dissolved, and means: (1) Any person denoted by the prefix "grand" or "great";

- (2) Sibling, whether full, half, or step;
- (3) Uncle or aunt;
- (4) Nephew or niece; or
- (5) First cousin.

Directs the department to plan, design, and implement strategies to prioritize the placement of children with willing and able kin when out-of-home placement is required.

Directs the department to collaborate with one or more nonprofit community-based agencies to develop a grant proposal for submission to potential funding sources, including governmental entities and private foundations, to establish a minimum of two pilot projects to assist kinship caregivers with understanding and navigating the system of services for children in out-of-home care. The proposal must seek to establish at least one project in eastern Washington and one project in western Washington, each project to be managed by a participating community-based agency.

Requires the kinship care navigators funded through the proposal to be responsible for at least the following: (1) Understanding the various state agency systems serving kinship caregivers;

- (2) Working in partnership with local community service providers;
- (3) Tracking trends, concerns, and other factors related to kinship caregivers; and
- (4) Assisting in establishing stable, respectful relationships between kinship caregivers and department staff.

Declares that implementation of the kinship care navigator pilot projects is contingent upon receipt of nonstate or private funding for that purpose.

Provides that within existing resources, the department shall establish an oversight committee to monitor, guide, and report on kinship care recommendations and implementation activities.

Requires the kinship care oversight committee to report to the legislature and the governor on the status of kinship care issues by December 1, 2004.

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 1233-S

May 14, 2003

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,
The House of Representatives of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to section 3, Substitute House Bill No. 1233 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to improving services for kinship caregivers;"

This bill requires the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to do more to promote kinship placements when children are placed in out-of-home care by the Children's Administration. It requires DSHS to develop more rigorous standardized kin search procedures, to seek grant funding to establish two pilot kinship care navigator projects to assist caregivers, and to establish a kinship care oversight committee.

Section 3 of the bill would have required DSHS to report to the Legislature and to the Governor regarding findings from the implementation of the two proposed pilot kinship care navigator projects. This is in addition to the report the bill requires from the kinship care oversight committee. I am concerned that this bill would create two new reporting requirements for DSHS at a time when we are seeking ways to reduce paperwork requirements in order to maximize limited staff resources. I have vetoed section 3, and I am directing DSHS to be prepared to instead brief the Legislature on the same topic.

For these reasons, I have vetoed section 3 of Substitute House Bill No. 1233.

With the exception of section 3, Substitute House Bill No. 1233 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor