

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SB 5809

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Revising jurisdiction of youth courts.

**Sponsors:** Senators Fairley and Kohl-Welles.

**Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections**

**House Committee on Juvenile Justice & Family Law**

**Background:** In 2002, the legislature passed a law that allows youth courts to hear and resolve cases involving juveniles alleged to have committed traffic infractions. The law also created a mechanism for youth courts, under the supervision of the juvenile court, to be used as diversion units. Finally, the 2002 law provided for "student courts" in schools to hear matters arising out of violations of school rules and policies.

The 2002 law amended three different titles of the Revised Code of Washington to establish youth courts, or student courts, in the state. First, because district courts generally have jurisdiction over traffic matters, the title on district courts was amended to create the possibility of setting up youth courts, under the auspices of the district courts, to hear certain traffic violations. Second, because juvenile matters are handled in juvenile court, the title on juvenile courts was amended to allow juvenile courts to refer to youth courts matters that are either required or allowed to be diverted. Finally, the title on schools was amended to allow for student courts to hear matters arising from violations of school rules.

The 2002 law contained a provision that could be interpreted as limiting the jurisdiction of youth courts in the state to hearing matters involving traffic infractions.

**Summary:** The section of the law that permits youth courts to hear matters involving certain traffic infractions under the supervision of the district courts is amended to include cross-references to the other sections of Washington law that allow youth courts to serve as diversion units in certain juvenile cases and to hear matters arising out of violations of school rules. The provision that states "Youth courts have no jurisdiction except as provided for in this chapter" is amended to refer to other sections of the Revised Code of Washington that establish a mechanism for youth courts and student courts to hear and resolve certain matters under the supervision of the juvenile courts and the schools.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate 47 0

House 94 0

**Effective:** July 24, 2005