

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5872

As Passed Senate, March 14, 2005

Title: An act relating to creating the joint task force on the administration and delivery of services to children and families.

Brief Description: Creating a task force on the administrative organization, structure, and delivery of services to children and families.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Stevens, Carrell, Mulliken, Deccio, Finkbeiner, Delvin, Benson, Johnson, Oke, Hewitt and Schmidt).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 2/17/05, 2/24/05 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 3/14/05, 43-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5872 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Brandland, Carrell and McAuliffe.

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: The Children's Administration (CA) and the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) are currently two separate administrations within a larger agency, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). CA and JRA are each lead by an assistant secretary who reports to the Secretary of DSHS. CA provides and oversees services to families with children regarding their safety and placement. JRA operates the state's juvenile rehabilitation facilities and related functions.

DSHS provides services to other needy populations through the Aging and Disability Services Administration (providing residential, home, and community services for these populations), the Economic Services Administration (providing financial assistance through public assistance and employment programs, child support, and child care), the Health and Rehabilitative Services Administration (providing mental health, alcohol and substance abuse, deaf and hard of hearing, vocational rehabilitation, and civil commitment services) and the Medical Assistance Administration (providing medicaid, medicare, and related services).

DSHS was created in 1970 to combine the powers, duties, and functions vested in the existing departments of public assistance, institutions, veterans rehabilitation council, and vocational rehabilitation. Legislative intent at the time, expressed a desire for the department to concern itself with changing social needs. Over the years since its formation, the types of services DSHS has provided to the ever growing and diverse population of Washington have

expanded. The legislature has seen fit at different times to create separate and distinct agencies which were once part of the larger DSHS. Some examples are the creation of the Department of Corrections in 1981 and the Department of Health in 1989.

Summary of Bill: A task force is created to determine the most appropriate and effective administrative structure for delivery of social and health services to children and families. This task force will compare the effectiveness of service delivery as part of an umbrella agency as well as service delivery as a separate entity. The task force will examine administrative structures used to deliver the same services in other states. Findings and recommendations on which administrative and service delivery structures can best accomplish positive outcomes for families and children will be published in a final report and will include costs and benefits of the various administrative and service delivery structures. Members of the task force will be appointed by the Governor and will include representatives from the legislature, higher education, agency personnel, judiciary, law enforcement, public defense, and advocates. The task force must begin meeting by May 1, 2005 and report findings and recommendations to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2005.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available for original bill.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: Yes.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: This could improve services to youth. Its time for a change. CPS should not be investigating suspected abuse at JRA facilities. Restructuring could accomplish the purposes we support as set out in statute in the Family Policy Council principles.

Testimony Against: None.

Other: We have concerns about the fiscal impact of this bill.

Who Testified: PRO: Jack Smith, Jerry Elliot, JRA and WFSE; Laurie Lippold, Children's Home Society; Kevin Glackin-Coley, Children's Alliance. OTHER: Laverne Lamoureux, Children's Administration and DSHS.

House Amendment(s): Membership in the joint task force is revised. Some members are to be jointly appointed by chairs of the House Children and Family Services Committee and the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee, rather than the Governor. The requirement for the first meeting date is removed, and the bill no longer takes effect immediately. Recommendations are to be reported to the Governor and the legislature.

Passed House: 96-0.