

**SB 6206 - DIGEST**

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 2ND SUB)

Finds the children of the state of Washington are the state's greatest resource, and that governmental authorities must make the prevention of child abuse and neglect a foremost priority.

Recognizes that preventable child fatalities and near fatalities represent the greatest failure of the child protection system but also the most meaningful opportunity for reform.

Requires unexpected child fatalities or near fatalities occurring within one year of the child receiving child welfare services be reviewed.

Provides that in the event of a child whose fatality or near fatality is the result of apparent abuse by his or her parent or caretaker, or upon the recommendation of the office of the family and children's ombudsman, the review team shall be comprised of individuals who had no involvement in the case but whose professional expertise is pertinent to the dynamics of the case.

Defines "child" and "near fatality."

Declares that reports issued shall be distributed to the appropriate committees of the legislature, and the department of social and health services shall create a public web site where all child fatality and near fatality review reports required shall be posted and maintained.

Asserts that within thirty days after a child fatality or near fatality review report is issued in response to a child's death or near fatality that resulted from abuse by the child's parent or caretaker, the appropriate committees of the legislature shall hold a joint public hearing to consider the findings.

Calls for the office of the family and children's ombudsman to issue an annual report to the legislature on the status of the implementation of child fatality and near fatality review recommendations.