

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5683

As Reported by House Committee On:
Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning

Title: An act relating to child-specific foster care licenses for placement of an Indian child in the custody of a federally recognized tribe or the tribe's child placing agency.

Brief Description: Concerning child-specific foster care licenses for placement of Indian children.

Sponsors: Senators Kauffman, Hasegawa, Kuderer, Liias, Lovelett, Lovick, Nguyen, Nobles, Pedersen, Saldaña, Schoesler, Stanford, Valdez and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning: 3/21/23, 3/24/23 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to issue a child-specific foster care license to an Indian child's family or extended family member in certain circumstances.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, YOUTH, & EARLY LEARNING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Senn, Chair; Cortes, Vice Chair; Taylor, Vice Chair; Eslick, Ranking Minority Member; Couture, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Callan, Dent, Goodman, Rule and Walsh.

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

Foster homes must be licensed by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

(DCYF). A person may apply to become a foster parent through the DCYF's Licensing Division or a child placing agency. Applicants must complete required training, undergo a background check, meet with a DCYF licenser for interviews and home visits, and complete a home study.

The DCYF may issue a child-specific license to a relative or a suitable person who opts to become licensed for placement of a specific child and that child's siblings or relatives in the DCYF's care, custody, and control. Such individuals must meet all minimum licensing requirements and other criteria the DCYF establishes by rule. For purposes of federal funding, a child-specific license is considered a full license with all of the rights and responsibilities of a foster family home license except that the licensee may only receive placement of specific children.

Summary of Bill:

The DCYF may issue a child-specific foster care license to an Indian child's family or extended family member who opts to become licensed for placement of a specific Indian child and that child's siblings or relatives in the custody of an Indian tribe or the tribe's placing agency.

An "Indian child" is a child who is a member of an Indian tribe or who is eligible for membership in an Indian tribe and is the biological child of a member of an Indian tribe. An "Indian child's family" or "extended family member" is defined to include an individual who is defined by the law or custom of the child's tribe as a relative of the child. If the child's tribe does not identify such individuals by law or custom, the term means an adult who is the Indian child's grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, niece, nephew, first or second cousin, or stepparent, even following termination of the marriage.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) In 2021 child-specific foster care licenses were created, but the law was silent when it came to Indian children. This bill allows Indian children to be placed in a child-specific licensed home and return to their community.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Claudia Kauffman, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.