

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1940

*As Passed House
March 20, 1991*

Title: An act relating to citizen foster care review boards operating under the jurisdiction of superior courts.

Brief Description: Establishing foster care citizen review boards.

Sponsor(s): By House Committee on Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Scott, Cole, Leonard, Winsley, Bowman, Rayburn, O'Brien and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Human Services, March 6, 1991, DPS;
Appropriations, March 10, 1991, DPS(HS)-A;
Passed House, March 20, 1991, 98-0.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
HUMAN SERVICES**

Majority Report: *That Substitute House Bill No. 1940 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*
Signed by 10 members: Representatives Leonard, Chair; Riley, Vice Chair; Winsley, Ranking Minority Member; Tate, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Beck; Brekke; Hargrove; Hochstatter; R. King; and H. Myers.

Staff: David Knutson (786-7146).

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS**

Majority Report: *That substitute bill by Committee on Human Services be substituted therefor and the substitute bill as amended by Committee on Appropriations do pass.* Signed by 26 members: Representatives Locke, Chair; Inslee, Vice Chair; Spanel, Vice Chair; Silver, Ranking Minority Member; Morton, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appelwick; Belcher; Bowman; Braddock; Brekke; Dorn; Ebersole; Ferguson; Fuhrman; Hine; Lisk; McLean; Nealey; Peery; Pruitt; Rust; H. Sommers; Sprenkle; Valle; Wang; and Wineberry.

Staff: Wayne Kawakami (786-7384).

Background: The Legislature authorized the operation of foster care citizen review boards during the 1989 legislative session. The citizen review boards are to provide periodic review of children in foster care, improve the quality of case review for children in foster care and their families, and involve the community in monitoring children in foster care. The findings and recommendations of foster care citizen review boards are advisory to the Department of Social and Health Services and the juvenile courts. Foster care citizen review boards have operated in Snohomish County and Yakima County since shortly after the 1989 legislative session. A question arose at the Snohomish County project, concerning the citizen review of Indian children who are placed in foster care. The Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee (LICWAC), expressed an interest in participating in the foster care citizen review board process when an Indian child is involved. The statutory authority to operate foster care citizen review boards expires on June 30, 1991.

Summary of Bill: The juvenile court is authorized to appoint the Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee to serve as the citizen review board in cases involving Indian children. The Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee will follow prescribed guidelines when it is involved in the review of Indian children in foster care. When Indian children are placed in foster care through a tribal court, the citizen review board process does not apply. Foster care citizen review boards will operate in counties selected by the Office of Administer of the Courts. The timing and contents of case reviews of children in foster care are clarified to ensure the reviews take place within statutory limits. The expiration of the authority to operate foster care citizen review boards is repealed.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Testimony For: (Human Services): The foster care citizen review boards were started as pilot projects to determine whether court time and costs could be reduced and foster care case review improved. While initial evaluations are positive, additional time is required to fully demonstrate the effectiveness of citizen foster care review. The unique needs of Indian children should be addressed through the citizen foster care review process. This can be accomplished by allowing the local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee to perform this function for Indian children.

(Appropriations): None.

Testimony Against: (Human Services): None.

(Appropriations): None.

Witnesses: (Human Services): Marie Jack, Elsie Anderson, Matthew WarBonnet, and Lisa Powers, Snohomish County Foster Care Review Board; Audrey Fetters, Lu Hitchcock, and Marion Lattomus, Yakima County Foster Care Citizen Review Board; Colleen Waterhouse Department of Social and Health Services; and Gloria Hemmen Office of the Administrator for the Courts.

(Appropriations): None.