

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**ESHB 1940**

**AS OF APRIL 2, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Establishing foster care citizen review boards.

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

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES**

**Staff:** Lidia Mori (786-7755)

**Hearing Dates:** April 3, 1991

**BACKGROUND:**

The Washington foster care citizen review board system was authorized by legislation passed in 1989. The citizen review boards periodically review the cases of children in foster care and involve the community in monitoring children in foster care. The findings and recommendations of foster care citizen review boards (FCCRBS) are advisory to the Department of Social and Health Services and the juvenile courts. FCCRBs have been established in two pilot sites, Snohomish and Yakima counties. The statutory authority to operate FCCRBs expires on June 30, 1991.

A conflict currently exists between the statute which specifies when FCCRB hearings are required to be held and the dependency statute. The intent of the Legislature was to allow FCCRB hearings to take the place of automatic court reviews with the provision that any party to a dependency proceeding may request and receive a court review hearing.

Some Indian tribes have expressed concern about the fact that FCCRBs sometimes review cases involving Indian children but the board may not contain any Indian reviewers. 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.

**SUMMARY:**

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.

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 The expiration of the authority to operate foster care citizen review boards is repealed.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** available

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