

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5201

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES,
FEBRUARY 7, 1991**

Brief Description: Providing for transitional living services for minors.

SPONSORS: Senators L. Smith, Stratton and Talmadge.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5201 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chairman; L. Smith, Vice Chairman; Craswell, and Stratton.

Staff: Lidia Mori (786-7755)

Hearing Dates: February 6, 1991; February 7, 1991

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Karen Hayes (786-7711)

Hearing Dates:

BACKGROUND:

A portion of youth living in out-of-home placement have no possibility of returning to the family home, and adoption and foster care are not likely or appropriate options. There is a continuum of out-of-home care; however, the services do not address the needs of this population. There are very few programs in Washington State which provide residential care and independent living services for older youth.

There is no description in statute regarding permanency planning. Support exists for a definition of permanency planning based on the ongoing comprehensive and individual needs of a child.

SUMMARY:

Permanency planning means the process by which a child is diagnostically assessed and provided treatment services based on his or her unique individual and developmental needs.

Transitional living programs provide shelter and services designed to promote self-sufficient living and minimize the incidence of long-term dependency on social services. Persons 16 to 18 years old or 16 years old until emancipation are eligible for transitional living services. An assessment

shall be done of each youth to determine whether the most appropriate plan for the minor is preparation for emancipation and whether the minor is motivated to participate in a transitional living program. The transitional living programs may include educational services, assistance to obtain vocational training or job readiness, instruction in life skills such as money management and access to community resources, counseling and development of long-term relationships with significant adults.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

It is clarified that a primary goal of transitional living services shall be the acquisition by the youth of basic educational and/or vocational skills that are compatible with the youth's treatment plan. If the youth shows a consistent unwillingness to participate in the acquisition of such skills, a reassessment will be done to determine the youth's appropriateness for the program.

An array of services are available to prevent out-of-home placement or to address the needs of children and families when out-of-home placement becomes necessary. However, transitional living services are lacking for older youth.

Appropriation: unspecified

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

Transitional living services are greatly needed. There is a severe lack of these services for older kids that are now running away from residential treatment facilities. The state may be able to access some federal money for independent living services.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED (Children & Family Services): Yvonne Chase, Assistant Secretary, Children, Youth and Family Services Admin. (pro); Stephen Watters, Executive Director, Federation of Residential Care Providers, Director, Toutle River Boys Ranch (pro); Sharon Osborne; Director, Children's Home Society, member, Federation of Residential Care Providers (pro)