

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5495

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

Brief Description: Establishing pilot facilities for the long-term care of children.

SPONSORS: Senator Talmadge.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended 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: March 5, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Many children that are placed in foster care or in any other type of out-of-home placement experience a substantial amount of instability. Often children in foster care are repeatedly shifted from one foster home to another or from one foster home to the home of a biological parent and then back again into foster care. There is concern that the instability that results from a child having numerous out-of-home placements will negatively affect the physical, mental and emotional development of the child.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Social and Health Services is directed to contract, through the request for proposal process, with an independent qualified agency to establish, as a pilot project, two facilities for the long-term care of children. Children between the ages of 12 to 18 who have failed three or more out-of-home placements and are not likely candidates for adoption are eligible for placement in such facilities. The facilities are semi-secure and are not intended to provide in-patient care for children experiencing acute or severe psychiatric impairments. The duration of the pilot program is two years. The pilot project will be evaluated by the Legislative Budget Committee and the evaluation will be submitted to the Legislature by December 31, 1991.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Children between the ages of 14 to 18 who have failed three or more out-of-home placements and are not likely candidates for adoption are eligible for placement in such facilities.

Appropriation: \$2,410,000

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested February 20, 1991

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

TESTIMONY FOR:

Residential care programs continue to be severely underfunded. Stability is needed in these children's lives and the concept embodied in this bill would offer some stability to children.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: There is a misperception that older children cannot be placed with a foster parent or adoptive family. The true need is to fully fund the current system of foster and group care homes.

TESTIFIED (Children & Family Services): PRO: Stephen Watters, Director, Toutle River Boys Ranch, Executive Director, Federation of Group Care Providers; Sharon Osborne, Director, Children's Home Society

TESTIFIED (Ways & Means): PRO: Stephen Watters, Julie Bonsteel, Federation of Residential Care Providers; Pat Dunn, Laurie Lippold, Children's Home Society; CON: William Quick, Department of Social and Health Services