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**SENATE BILL 6467**

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**State of Washington**

**52nd Legislature**

**1992 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Stratton, Roach, Craswell, Talmadge, McDonald, L. Smith, Vognild, Owen, Rasmussen, W. Hansen, Murray, Snyder, Skratek, von Reichbauer and Gaspard

Read first time 02/03/92. Referred to Committee on Children & Family Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to the Washington council on children, youth, and  
2 family; amending RCW 74.14A.020; adding new sections to chapter 43.06  
3 RCW; creating new sections; and making an appropriation.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that a primary  
6 goal of public involvement in the lives of children has been to  
7 strengthen the family unit.

8 However, the legislature recognizes that traditional two-parent  
9 families with one parent routinely at home are now in the minority. In  
10 addition, extended family and natural community supports have eroded  
11 drastically. The legislature recognizes that public policy assumptions  
12 must be altered to account for this new social reality. Expanded  
13 public effort to support, strengthen, and help refashion family and

1 community associations to care for children is now required of  
2 government.

3 For these reasons, it is the purpose of this act to modify public  
4 policy and programs to empower communities to support and respond to  
5 the needs of individual families and children. The state shall focus  
6 public policy on community strategies that empower families to preserve  
7 and protect their children, and support alternative community  
8 environments for children who are out of the care of their family.

9 **Sec. 2.** RCW 74.14A.020 and 1983 c 192 s 2 are each amended to read  
10 as follows:

11 ~~((The department of social and health services))~~ (1) State efforts  
12 shall address the needs of children and their families, including  
13 emotionally disturbed and mentally ill children, potentially dependent  
14 children, and families-in-conflict by:

15 ~~((+1))~~ (a) Serving children and families as a unit in the least  
16 restrictive setting available and in close proximity to the family  
17 home, consistent with the best interests and special needs of the  
18 child;

19 ~~((+2))~~ (b) Ensuring that appropriate social and health services  
20 are provided to the family unit both prior to the removal of a child  
21 from the home and after family reunification;

22 ~~((+3))~~ (c) Recognizing the interdependent and changing nature of  
23 families and communities, building upon their inherent strengths,  
24 maintaining their dignity and respect, and tailoring programs to their  
25 specific circumstances;

26 (d) Developing and implementing comprehensive, preventive, and  
27 early intervention social and health services which have demonstrated  
28 the ability to delay or reduce the need for out-of-home placements and  
29 ameliorate problems before they become chronic or severe;

1       ~~((4))~~ (e) Being sensitive to the family and community culture,  
2 norms, values, and expectations, and ensuring participation of ethnic  
3 minorities at all levels of planning, delivery, and evaluation efforts.  
4 However, cultural sensitivity should not preclude cross cultural child  
5 care or adoption arrangement where these can promote the best interests  
6 of the child;

7       (f)(i) Developing coordinated social and health services which:

8       ~~((a))~~ (A) Identify problems experienced by children and their  
9 families early and provide services which are adequate in availability,  
10 appropriate to the situation, and effective;

11       ~~((b))~~ (B) Seek to bring about meaningful change before family  
12 situations become irreversibly destructive and before disturbed  
13 psychological behavioral patterns and health problems become severe or  
14 permanent;

15       ~~((c))~~ (C) Serve children and families in their own homes thus  
16 preventing unnecessary out-of-home placement or institutionalization;

17       ~~((d))~~ (D) Focus resources on social and health problems as they  
18 begin to manifest themselves rather than waiting for chronic and severe  
19 patterns of illness, criminality, and dependency to develop which  
20 require long-term treatment, maintenance, or custody;

21       ~~((e))~~ (E) Reduce duplication of and gaps in service delivery;

22       ~~((f))~~ (F) Improve planning, budgeting, and communication among  
23 all units of the department serving children and families; and

24       ~~((g))~~ (G) Develop outcome standards for measuring the  
25 effectiveness of social and health services for children and families.

26       (ii) In developing services under this subsection, local  
27 communities must be partners in planning and developing support  
28 networks that are tailored to their unique needs.

29       (2) The legislature recognizes that full implementation of the  
30 intent stated in section 1 of this act and this section, will require

1 a fundamental reform of the values, attitudes, and behavior of  
2 virtually all persons, professional disciplines and operating  
3 assumptions within public and private agencies concerned with children,  
4 youth, and families. It is the legislature's intention to encourage  
5 this change through the provisions of sections 3 through 5 of this act.

6 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. There is established in the executive  
7 office of the governor, reporting directly to the governor and the  
8 legislature, the Washington council on children, youth, and families.

9 The council shall be composed of no less than twelve persons to be  
10 appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate, who have direct  
11 experience in helping cope with the problems of children, youth, or  
12 families, and who, together represent the state's geographic, ethnic,  
13 and cultural diversity.

14 Members shall serve four-year terms and may be reimbursed according  
15 to RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

16 The governor may appoint up to six ex officio members from his or  
17 her cabinet who must regularly attend council meetings and provide  
18 assistance to the council in its deliberations, but who may not vote or  
19 direct any aspect of the council's activities.

20 In addition, the senate and the house of representatives each may  
21 designate the chair and ranking minority member of one of their  
22 relevant standing committees of reference to serve as ex officio  
23 members.

24 The governor shall appoint a chair from among the council's voting  
25 members.

26 The council shall employ an executive director, a full-time staff  
27 assistant, and a clerical assistant. The council may employ such other  
28 personnel as are needed to carry out the council's duties under  
29 sections 3 through 5 of this act, within available resources.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 4.**        The council shall:

2        (1) Review the programs, policies, and services for children,  
3 youth, and families provided by public and private agencies, including  
4 those concerned with education, social services, juvenile justice, law  
5 enforcement, community development, employment, and health for the  
6 consistency of their efforts with the policy goals stated in section 1  
7 of this act and RCW 74.14A.020;

8        (2) Search for any interdepartmental gaps, inconsistencies, and  
9 inefficiencies in these agencies' efforts relative to attainment of the  
10 policy goals in section 1 of this act and RCW 74.14A.020;

11        (3) Identify and advocate for changes in any statute, regulation,  
12 procedure, program, budget, organization, professional training, or  
13 other activity that would promote closer harmony with the policy goals  
14 in section 1 of this act and RCW 74.14A.020;

15        (4) Facilitate joint planning and service coordination among public  
16 and private agencies as described in subsection (1) of this section;

17        (5) Accept appropriations, gifts, loans, and grants from public and  
18 private agencies;

19        (6) Provide leadership to all children and family service efforts  
20 in the state by disseminating information on effective programs and  
21 activities, and by contracting with public and private agencies for  
22 research, demonstration, or pilot projects;

23        (7) Encourage the formation of local councils on children, youth,  
24 and families where they do not now exist in any form, or encourage the  
25 modification of existing local councils that bring together  
26 representatives of public and private agencies described in subsection  
27 (1) of this section to jointly plan, coordinate, or operate activities  
28 in support of the purposes of sections 3 through 5 of this act; and

29        (8) Report regularly to the governor and legislature regarding its  
30 progress in implementing sections 3 through 5 of this act, including

1 any specific recommendations for budgetary, statutory, or regulatory  
2 change.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** To the extent that any power or duty of  
4 the council created according to sections 3 through 5 of this act may  
5 duplicate efforts of existing councils, commissions, advisory  
6 committees, or other entities, the governor is authorized to take  
7 necessary actions to eliminate such duplication. This shall include  
8 authority to consolidate similar councils or activities in a manner  
9 consistent with the goals of sections 3 through 5 of this act.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** Sections 3 through 5 of this act are  
11 each added to chapter 43.06 RCW.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** The sum of ..... dollars, or  
13 as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium  
14 ending June 30, 1993, from the general fund to the governor for the  
15 purposes of this act.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** If specific funding for the purposes of  
17 this act, referencing this act by bill number, is not provided by June  
18 30, 1992, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act shall be null and  
19 void.