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ENGROSSED SENATE BILL 6555

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State of Washington

56th Legislature

2000 Regular Session

By Senators Long, Hargrove, Patterson, Costa, Eide, Winsley and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 01/19/2000. Referred to Committee on Human Services & Corrections.

1 AN ACT Relating to the evaluations of foster children for long-term  
2 needs; and amending RCW 74.14A.050.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 74.14A.050 and 1998 c 245 s 149 are each amended to  
5 read as follows:

6 The secretary shall:

7 (1)(a) Consult with relevant qualified professionals to develop a  
8 set of minimum guidelines to be used for identifying all children who  
9 are in a state-assisted support system, whether at-home or out-of-home,  
10 who are likely to need long-term care or assistance, because they face  
11 physical, emotional, medical, mental, or other long-term challenges;

12 (b) The guidelines must, at a minimum, consider the following  
13 criteria for identifying children in need of long-term care or  
14 assistance:

15 (i) Placement within the foster care system for two years or more;

16 (ii) Multiple foster care placements;

17 (iii) Repeated unsuccessful efforts to be placed with a permanent  
18 adoptive family;

19 (iv) Chronic behavioral or educational problems;

1 (v) Repetitive criminal acts or offenses;

2 (vi) Failure to comply with court-ordered disciplinary actions and  
3 other imposed guidelines of behavior, including drug and alcohol  
4 rehabilitation; and

5 (vii) Chronic physical, emotional, medical, mental, or other  
6 similar conditions necessitating long-term care or assistance;

7 (2) Develop programs that are necessary for the long-term care of  
8 children and youth that are identified for the purposes of this  
9 section. Programs must: (a) Effectively address the educational,  
10 physical, emotional, mental, and medical needs of children and youth;  
11 and (b) incorporate an array of family support options, to individual  
12 needs and choices of the child and family. The programs must be ready  
13 for implementation by January 1, 1995;

14 (3) Conduct an evaluation of all children currently within the  
15 foster care agency caseload to identify those children who meet the  
16 criteria set forth in this section. The evaluation shall be completed  
17 by January 1, 1994. All children entering the foster care system after  
18 January 1, 1994, must be evaluated for identification of long-term  
19 needs within thirty days of placement;

20 (4) By region, report to the legislature on the following using  
21 aggregate data every six months beginning December 31, 2000:

22 (a) The number of children evaluated during the first thirty days  
23 of placement as required in subsection (3) of this section;

24 (b) The tool or tools used to evaluate children, including the  
25 content of the tool and the method by which the tool was validated;

26 (c) The findings from the evaluation regarding the children's  
27 needs;

28 (d) How the department used the results of the evaluation to  
29 provide services to the foster child to meet his or her needs; and

30 (e) Whether and how the evaluation results assisted the department  
31 in providing appropriate services to the child, matching the child with  
32 an appropriate care provider early on in the child's placement and  
33 achieving the child's permanency plan in a timely fashion.

34 (5) Each region of the department shall make the appropriate number  
35 of referrals to the foster care assessment program to ensure that the  
36 services offered by the program are used to the extent funded pursuant  
37 to the department's contract with the program. The department shall  
38 report to the legislature by November 30, 2000, on the number of  
39 referrals, by region, to the foster care assessment program. If the

1 regions are not referring an adequate number of cases to the program,  
2 the department shall include in its report an explanation of what  
3 action it is or has taken to ensure that the referrals are adequate.

4 (6) The department shall report to the legislature by December 15,  
5 2000, on how it will use the foster care assessment program model to  
6 assess children as they enter out-of-home care.

7 (7) The department is to accomplish the tasks listed in subsections  
8 (4) through (6) of this section within existing resources.

9 (8) Study and develop a comprehensive plan for the evaluation and  
10 identification of all children and youth in need of long-term care or  
11 assistance, including, but not limited to, the mentally ill,  
12 developmentally disabled, medically fragile, seriously emotionally or  
13 behaviorally disabled, and physically impaired;

14 ~~((+5))~~ (9) Study and develop a plan for the children and youth in  
15 need of long-term care or assistance to ensure the coordination of  
16 services between the department's divisions and between other state  
17 agencies who are involved with the child or youth;

18 ~~((+6))~~ (10) Study and develop guidelines for transitional  
19 services, between long-term care programs, based on the person's age or  
20 mental, physical, emotional, or medical condition; and

21 ~~((+7))~~ (11) Study and develop a statutory proposal for the  
22 emancipation of minors.

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