

5480-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Fairley, McAuliffe, Eide, Rasmussen, Long, Thibaudeau, Kline, Franklin, Kohl-Welles, Regala and McCaslin)

Brief Description: Creating the relative caregiver program.

**SB 5480-S - DIGEST**

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 2ND SUB)

Declares an intent to: (1) Recognize family relationships in which a relative is the head of a household that includes a child otherwise at risk of foster care placement;

(2) Enhance family preservation and stability by recognizing that most children in such placements with relatives do not need intensive supervision of the placement by the courts or by the department of social and health services;

(3) Recognize that permanency in the best interests of the child can be achieved through a variety of permanency options, including long-term relative custody, guardianship, or adoption, by providing additional placement options and incentives that will achieve permanency and stability for many children who are otherwise at risk of foster care placement because of abuse, abandonment, or neglect, but who may successfully be able to be placed in the care of relatives.

Requires the department to adopt rules to provide relatives who are caring for needy children a special monthly relative caregiver benefit, which shall be in the amount of at least one hundred dollars per child per month. This benefit shall be available only for a child who is not the first child in the assistance unit.

Directs the Washington state institute for public policy to convene a work group to determine: The number of families with relatives raising kin, the needs of the relative kinship caregivers and the children being raised by them, whether additional services and funding are needed and issues regarding access to services and funding sources.

Requires that the report and recommendations of the work group shall be presented to the legislature not later than December 1, 2001.