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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5872**

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**State of Washington**

**59th Legislature**

**2005 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Stevens, Carrell, Mulliken, Deccio, Finkbeiner, Delvin, Benson, Johnson, Oke, Hewitt and Schmidt)

READ FIRST TIME 02/28/05.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a department of family and children's  
2 services; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1)(a) A seven-member task force is hereby  
5 established to determine the actual structure for the new department of  
6 family and children's services.

7 (b) The chair of the task force shall be the dean of the school of  
8 social work at the University of Washington or an academic professor  
9 chosen by the dean.

10 (c) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the six other  
11 members of the task force shall be jointly chosen by the chairs of the  
12 senate committee on human services and corrections and the house of  
13 representatives committee on children and family services as follows:

14 (i) The director of the office of public defense;

15 (ii) A law enforcement officer who is a recently retired sheriff  
16 with experience in working with child protective services  
17 investigations;

18 (iii) The director of the office of the family and children's  
19 ombudsman;

1 (iv) A line worker from the juvenile rehabilitation administration  
2 community supervision and placement workers;

3 (v) A line social worker with a master's in social work and fifteen  
4 years' experience in the public or private sector providing services to  
5 abused or neglected children and their families; and

6 (vi) A private vendor of service to families of children and  
7 children in both in-home and out-of-home placements as a result of  
8 abuse or neglect or for juvenile rehabilitation.

9 (2)(a) The goal of the task force is to determine how best to  
10 create a department of family and children's services in the state of  
11 Washington. There are models of excellent programs in other regions of  
12 the nation and members of the task force may be sent to learn how they  
13 achieve their goals with an organizational system that is not under a  
14 state umbrella agency like the department of social and health  
15 services.

16 (b) The fundamental focus of the task force will be to: (i)  
17 Determine how best to structure a department of family and children's  
18 services in Washington to achieve a seamless process that protects the  
19 safety of children; helps troubled families safely parent their  
20 children and finds safe, stable, and permanent families for children  
21 when a return to family is not possible; protects the community;  
22 reduces and prevents juvenile crime; and considers the mental health  
23 needs and substance and chemical dependency needs of both the parents  
24 and/or the children; and (ii) determine how much it would cost and any  
25 statutory changes that would be necessary.

26 (c) The task force shall report on the appropriate personnel,  
27 structure, and supports that are necessary within the new department of  
28 family and children's services to enable the fundamental state  
29 functions of child protection, child welfare, and juvenile  
30 rehabilitation to be provided in the most cost-effective manner.

31 (3) The first meeting of the task force shall be no later than June  
32 1, 2005, with subsequent meetings as needed. The task force may  
33 consult with others as needed.

34 (4)(a) The interim report with part one of the findings and  
35 recommendations shall be submitted to appropriate committees of the  
36 legislature by March 1, 2006.

37 (b) These findings and recommendations shall describe the structure

1 of the new department that will ensure the highest quality service to  
2 the right families in a timely way.

3 (5) The final report with part two of the findings and  
4 recommendations shall be submitted to appropriate committees of the  
5 legislature by November 1, 2006, containing findings and  
6 recommendations that describe:

- 7 (a) The cost of the new department;
- 8 (b) Changes in state law that will be required; and
- 9 (c) Cost efficiencies and savings and reductions in other services.

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