
**Health Care & Wellness
Committee**

HB 2937

Brief Description: Providing for vulnerable adult fatality review.

Sponsors: Representatives Moeller, Morrell, Schual-Berke and Chase; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the Department of Social and Health Services to conduct a vulnerable adult fatality review when there is reason to believe that a vulnerable adult's death was related to abuse, abandonment, exploitation, neglect, or self-neglect.

Hearing Date: 1/30/08

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

A vulnerable adult includes a person who:

- is 60 years of age or older who has a functional, mental, or physical inability for self-care;
- has been found to be incapacitated;
- has a developmental disability;
- resides in a licensed facility such as a nursing home, adult family home, or residential habilitation center; or
- is receiving hospice or home health services.

Specified individuals are required to file a report to the Department of Social and Health Services (Department), and in some cases to local law enforcement agencies, when there is reasonable cause to believe that a vulnerable adult has been the subject of abandonment, abuse, financial exploitation, neglect, sexual abuse, or physical assault. The individuals who are required to report include Department employees; law enforcement officers; social workers; facility operators or employees; health care providers; individual providers; and employees of social service or caregiver agencies. Upon receiving a report, the Department must initiate an investigation within

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24 hours. Vulnerable adults may seek protective orders or file civil suits for damages resulting from abandonment, abuse, exploitation, or neglect.

Summary of Bill:

If the Department has reason to believe that the death of a vulnerable adult may be related to abuse, abandonment, exploitation, or neglect or self-neglect, the Department may conduct a vulnerable adult fatality review. The review may be conducted in situations in which the vulnerable adult was either:

- receiving home and community-based services in his or her home within 60 days prior to the vulnerable adult's death; or
- living in his or her home and was the subject of a report under vulnerable adult protection provisions within the 12 months prior to his or her death.

All reports, communications, and other materials used to conduct the fatality review are confidential and not subject to disclosure.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.