

# HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

## SB 5127

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**Title:** An act relating to investigations of abuse or neglect.

**Brief Description:** Prohibiting law enforcement officers from conducting investigations of abuse or neglect concerning a child for which the officer is a parent, guardian, or foster parent.

**Sponsors:** Senators Kohl-Welles, Hargrove, Long, Heavey, McCaslin, Stevens, Zarelli, Prentice, Kline, Winsley and Costa.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits a law enforcement officer from participating in an investigation of abuse or neglect of a child for whom the officer is a parent, guardian, or foster parent.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**Staff:** Jim Morishima (786-7191).

#### Background:

Certain professionals have the duty to report possible child abuse or neglect to law enforcement agencies or the Department of Social and Health Services whenever they have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected. Law enforcement officers have a duty to investigate allegations of child abuse or neglect. A law enforcement officer may take a child into custody without a court order if the officer has probable cause to believe the child has been abused or neglected, and that the child would be injured or could not be taken into custody if it were necessary to first obtain a court order. If a law enforcement officer has probable cause to believe that sexual or physical abuse has taken place, the law enforcement officer may arrest the alleged perpetrator without a warrant.

#### Summary of Bill:

A law enforcement officer is prohibited from participating as an investigator of alleged abuse or neglect concerning a child for whom the law enforcement officer is, or has been within the preceding six months, a parent, guardian, or foster parent.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Office of Program Research