

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

SSB 6722

Title: An act relating to false reports of child abuse or neglect.

Brief Description: Providing procedures for handling false reports of child abuse or neglect.

Sponsors: Senators Hargrove, Snyder, Stevens, Rasmussen and Oke.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Meeting Date: February 21, 2000.

Bill Analysis Prepared by: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background: A child may be removed from his or her home based on allegations of child abuse or neglect, and placed temporarily outside the home. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) then investigates the allegations of abuse or neglect. In addition, allegations of child abuse or neglect may be made, regarding state employees, that must also be investigated.

As the result of the investigations, the department may determine that the allegations are unfounded. However, the unfounded allegations are not erased from their records, but remain as an unfounded allegation.—

There are circumstances in which the department must respond to request for such records. This means that the unfounded allegation of child abuse or neglect is communicated to a third party, despite the individual being cleared from wrongdoing.

Summary of Bill: The DSHS is prohibited from releasing unfounded allegations of abuse or neglect to a child-placing agency, private adoption agency, or any other licensed provider.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

