

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 6389

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Extending juvenile court jurisdiction over permanency planning matters in dependency proceedings.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Stevens, Hargrove and Long).

Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections
House Committee on Judiciary

Background: Several years ago, the Legislature added permanent legal custody orders (third party custody) under RCW 26.10 as a permitted permanency plan under the dependency statute. This change allowed a juvenile court to approve a permanent legal custody order entered by the superior court as a permanency plan and dismiss the dependency.

Permanent legal custody orders have not been utilized as a permanent plan as often as originally anticipated because obtaining a permanent custody order presents an additional step that can be costly.

Summary: The juvenile court hearing a dependency petition has concurrent jurisdiction to hear a permanent custody petition under RCW 26.10. The parents, guardians or legal custodians, with the court's approval, must agree to the entry of the permanent custody order. Other parties to the dependency may agree to the order. The petitioner in an RCW 26.10 action who is not a party to the dependency must agree to the entry of the custody order. In addition, the order must be in the best interests of the child.

If a custody order is entered under RCW 26.10 and the dependency dismissed, the Department of Social and Health Services shall not continue to supervise the placement.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	44	0
House	98	0

Effective: June 8, 2000