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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6055**

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**State of Washington**

**57th Legislature**

**2001 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Long, Hargrove and Stevens)

READ FIRST TIME 02/26/01.

1 AN ACT Relating to evaluating children within the foster care  
2 agency caseload; and amending RCW 74.14A.050.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 74.14A.050 and 2000 c 232 s 1 are each amended to read  
5 as follows:

6 The secretary shall:

7 (1)(a) Consult with relevant qualified professionals to develop a  
8 set of minimum guidelines to be used for identifying all children who  
9 are in a state-assisted support system, whether at-home or out-of-home,  
10 who are likely to need long-term care or assistance, because they face  
11 physical, emotional, medical, mental, or other long-term challenges;

12 (b) The guidelines must, at a minimum, consider the following  
13 criteria for identifying children in need of long-term care or  
14 assistance:

15 (i) Placement within the foster care system for two years or more;

16 (ii) Multiple foster care placements;

17 (iii) Repeated unsuccessful efforts to be placed with a permanent  
18 adoptive family;

19 (iv) Chronic behavioral or educational problems;

1 (v) Repetitive criminal acts or offenses;

2 (vi) Failure to comply with court-ordered disciplinary actions and  
3 other imposed guidelines of behavior, including drug and alcohol  
4 rehabilitation; and

5 (vii) Chronic physical, emotional, medical, mental, or other  
6 similar conditions necessitating long-term care or assistance;

7 (2) Develop programs that are necessary for the long-term care of  
8 children and youth that are identified for the purposes of this  
9 section. Programs must: (a) Effectively address the educational,  
10 physical, emotional, mental, and medical needs of children and youth;  
11 and (b) incorporate an array of family support options, to individual  
12 needs and choices of the child and family. The programs must be ready  
13 for implementation by January 1, 1995;

14 (3) Conduct an evaluation of all children currently within the  
15 foster care agency caseload to identify those children who meet the  
16 criteria set forth in this section. (~~The evaluation shall be~~  
17 ~~completed by January 1, 1994.~~) All children entering the foster care  
18 system (~~after January 1, 1994,~~) must be evaluated for identification  
19 of long-term needs within thirty days of placement;

20 (4) As a result of the passage of chapter 232, Laws of 2000, the  
21 department is conducting a pilot project to do a comparative analysis  
22 of a variety of assessment instruments to determine the most effective  
23 tools and methods for evaluation of children. The pilot project may  
24 extend through August 31, 2001. The department shall report to the  
25 appropriate committees in the senate and house of representatives by  
26 September 30, 2001, on the results of the pilot project. The  
27 department shall select an assessment instrument that can be  
28 implemented within available resources. The department shall complete  
29 statewide implementation by December 31, 2001. The department shall  
30 report to the appropriate committees in the senate and house of  
31 representatives on how the use of the selected assessment instrument  
32 has affected department policies, by no later than December 31, 2002,  
33 December 31, 2004, and December 31, 2006;

34 (5) By region, report to the legislature on the following using  
35 aggregate data every six months beginning December 31, 2000:

36 (a) The number of children evaluated during the first thirty days  
37 of placement as required in subsection (3) of this section;

38 (b) The tool or tools used to evaluate children, including the  
39 content of the tool and the method by which the tool was validated;

1 (c) The findings from the evaluation regarding the children's  
2 needs;

3 (d) How the department used the results of the evaluation to  
4 provide services to the foster child to meet his or her needs; and

5 (e) Whether and how the evaluation results assisted the department  
6 in providing appropriate services to the child, matching the child with  
7 an appropriate care provider early on in the child's placement and  
8 achieving the child's permanency plan in a timely fashion((-));

9 ((+5+)) (6) Each region of the department shall make the  
10 appropriate number of referrals to the foster care assessment program  
11 to ensure that the services offered by the program are used to the  
12 extent funded pursuant to the department's contract with the program.  
13 The department shall report to the legislature by November 30, 2000, on  
14 the number of referrals, by region, to the foster care assessment  
15 program. If the regions are not referring an adequate number of cases  
16 to the program, the department shall include in its report an  
17 explanation of what action it is or has taken to ensure that the  
18 referrals are adequate((-));

19 ((+6+)) (7) The department shall report to the legislature by  
20 December 15, 2000, on how it will use the foster care assessment  
21 program model to assess children as they enter out-of-home care((-));

22 ((+7+)) (8) The department is to accomplish the tasks listed in  
23 subsections (4) through ((+6+)) (7) of this section within existing  
24 resources((-));

25 ((+8+)) (9) Study and develop a comprehensive plan for the  
26 evaluation and identification of all children and youth in need of  
27 long-term care or assistance, including, but not limited to, the  
28 mentally ill, developmentally disabled, medically fragile, seriously  
29 emotionally or behaviorally disabled, and physically impaired;

30 ((+9+)) (10) Study and develop a plan for the children and youth in  
31 need of long-term care or assistance to ensure the coordination of  
32 services between the department's divisions and between other state  
33 agencies who are involved with the child or youth;

34 ((+10+)) (11) Study and develop guidelines for transitional  
35 services, between long-term care programs, based on the person's age or  
36 mental, physical, emotional, or medical condition; and

1        (~~(11)~~) (12) Study and develop a statutory proposal for the  
2 emancipation of minors.

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