

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 5749**

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES,  
MARCH 5, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Creating a citizen review board system for cases involving children.

**SPONSORS:** Senators Roach and Rasmussen.

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES**

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5749 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chairman; L. Smith, Vice Chairman; Craswell, and Stratton.

**Staff:** Joanne Conrad (786-7190)

**Hearing Dates:** February 20, 1991; March 5, 1991

**BACKGROUND:**

Quality assurance and accountability of state government entities responsible for the provision of services to children and families have emerged as growing concerns, as the populations in need of services increase in size and complexity. Although specialized citizen review boards and a children's services advisory committee exist in statute, there is no general oversight committee charged with the nonjudicial review, monitoring and evaluation of the cross-section of services provided to children and their families by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), and composed of representative citizens throughout the state.

**SUMMARY:**

A Children and Family Services Citizen Review Board is established, to review and monitor cases involving children, with the goal of improving the quality of case management, and providing statewide community involvement in the quality assurance efforts of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

The Citizen Review Board is comprised of seven members, appointed legislatively and by DSHS, representing the socioeconomic, ethnic and geographical diversity of the state. The board is imbued with the power to access and review a variety of cases involving the provision of services to children and families, and may make recommendations regarding policy, procedural and legal improvements to DSHS and the Legislature.

**EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:**

The "citizen" status of board members is clarified and the name of the entity is changed to "Citizens' Oversight Board." The duty of the board to limit itself to evaluations and recommendations is clarified. There are technical changes made.

**Appropriation:** \$49,000

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested

**TESTIMONY FOR:** None

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Colleen Waterhouse, DCFS/DSHS; Bev Hermanson,  
Washington Federation of State Employees