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HOUSE BILL 1478

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State of Washington

52nd Legislature

1991 Regular Session

By Representatives McLean, Hargrove, Bowman, Brekke, Padden, Tate, Rasmussen, Ballard, Wynne, Paris, Fuhrman, Brough, Betrozoff, Winsley, Forner, Brumsickle, D. Sommers and Mitchell.

Read first time January 30, 1991. Referred to Committee on Human Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to children in need of treatment; adding new  
2 sections to chapter 13.34 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the treatment  
5 of children who use and abuse alcohol and other drugs is of state  
6 concern. The legislature recognizes that the first principle is to  
7 prevent children from using alcohol and other drugs but failing that,  
8 the second principle is to intervene early in the course of the  
9 addiction. The legislature further recognizes that the state has a  
10 responsibility to assist families of affected youth in obtaining  
11 treatment at the earliest possible time. Therefore, the legislature  
12 intends to provide a mechanism whereby families may seek assistance  
13 from the courts in intervening in their children's addictions.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    A new section is added to chapter 13.34 RCW  
2 to read as follows:

3        (1) A parent or legal guardian of a child may petition the superior  
4 court to commit a child to a secure community hospital facility for  
5 seventy-two hours to evaluate the child for possible substance abuse.  
6 In determining whether to grant the petition, the court may consider  
7 any evidence that would indicate that the child may have a substance  
8 abuse problem, including the child's school attendance patterns and  
9 class performance, the relationship with his or her parents, siblings,  
10 and others, as well as the parent's or guardian's attempts to control  
11 the problem without the intervention of the court.

12        (2) The parent or guardian shall locate the facility that is  
13 willing to accept the child for evaluation.

14        (3) If the court finds that the child may be abusing alcohol or  
15 other drugs, the court shall grant the petition and order that the  
16 child be committed to the facility identified by the parent or  
17 guardian.    However, the court may order that the child be sent to  
18 another secure community hospital facility for good cause.

19        (4) The child shall be evaluated by a professional trained in  
20 making substance abuse evaluations.

21        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**    A new section is added to chapter 13.34 RCW  
22 to read as follows:

23        If the child's evaluation shows that the child is addicted to  
24 alcohol or other drugs, the court may order that the child be committed  
25 to an inpatient treatment facility for sixty days.    At the end of the  
26 sixty days, the court shall review the child's progress.

27        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 4.**        (1) The governor shall appoint a task  
28 force to study treatment methods and programs for children with alcohol

1 and substance abuse problems. The task force shall consist of at least  
2 ten members with a representative from each of the following: The  
3 department of social and health services, two private providers of  
4 alcohol and drug abuse treatment from different behavioral sciences  
5 backgrounds, a prosecuting attorney and a defense attorney who handle  
6 juvenile cases, a juvenile probation officer, a juvenile court judge,  
7 two parents of children who have abused alcohol or drugs, one member of  
8 the senate children and family services committee, and one member of  
9 the house of representatives judiciary committee.

10 (2) The task force shall consider at least the following:

11 (a) The number, ages, and gender of children with substance abuse  
12 treatment needs within the state;

13 (b) The availability of existing treatment and methods for dealing  
14 with children with substance abuse problems, both within and outside  
15 the family; and

16 (c) The costs of inpatient and outpatient treatment.

17 (3) The task force shall report its findings to the legislature not  
18 later than December 31, 1991.

19 (4) The task force shall cease to exist on June 30, 1992.