

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1408

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to teen pregnancy prevention.

Brief Description: Providing a comprehensive program for teen pregnancy prevention.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Sommers, Leonard, Cooke, Thibaudeau, Brough, Riley, Wolfe, Thomas, Karahalios, Ballasiotes, Forner, Long, Schmidt, Flemming, Silver, Eide, Wood, Shin, Linville, R. Meyers, J. Kohl, Ogden, Valle, Ludwig, Bray, Basich, Wineberry, Jones, Roland, Mielke, Wang, Heavey, Pruitt, Brown, Dellwo, Scott, Rayburn, King, Cothorn, Kessler, G. Cole, Rust, Springer, Kremen, Johanson, L. Johnson, Locke, Sheldon, Morris, H. Myers, Jacobsen and Anderson.)

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Human Services, February 10, 1993, DPS;
Appropriations, February 24, 1993, DPS(HS-A APP);
Passed House, March 9, 1993, 83-12;
Amended by Senate;
Passed Legislature, April 20, 1993, 85-12.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Leonard, Chair; Riley, Vice Chair; Cooke, Ranking Minority Member; Talcott, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brown; Karahalios; Lisk; Patterson; Thibaudeau; and Wolfe.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Padden.

Staff: David Knutson (786-7146).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Human Services be substituted therefor and the substitute bill as amended by Committee on Appropriations do pass. Signed by

20 members: Representatives Locke, Chair; Valle, Vice Chair; Silver, Ranking Minority Member; Carlson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appelwick; Ballasiotes; Basich; Cooke; Dellwo; Dorn; Dunshee; G. Fisher; Jacobsen; Leonard; Linville; Rust; Sehlin; Sommers; Talcott; and Wolfe.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Morton; Sheahan; and Stevens.

Staff: Maureen Morris (786-7152).

Background: Over 15,000 teenage girls become pregnant each year in Washington state. Adolescent pregnancies can cause young mothers to drop out of school, reduce their ability to earn a living wage, increase their likelihood of becoming dependent on public assistance, and increase the likelihood that their child will grow up in poverty. There are currently limited programs and services designed to reduce teenage pregnancies in Washington.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Health will fund teen pregnancy prevention projects. The projects will be evaluated by the reduction of the pregnancy and birth rates among teens in the community served. The applications for funding will include components which address religious, cultural, and socioeconomic differences in the community to be served, and the inclusion of sexual abstinence as an acceptable method of pregnancy prevention. A teen pregnancy prevention media campaign will be conducted in conjunction with local media outlets and interested organizations and corporations.

The family planning services available through the First Steps program are extended from two months immediately following a pregnancy to 12 months immediately following a pregnancy. The Department of Health is authorized to offer family planning services to women who meet the financial eligibility criteria for maternity coverage through the First Steps Program.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: (Human Services) The pregnancy rate for teen girls is too high. Programs which reduce the pregnancy rate should be expanded. The availability of family planning services should be increased.

(Appropriations) It is clear our present programs aren't working. Young women need information to make responsible

decisions, Most young women have been sexually active for six months to one year before they seek family planning services. Teen pregnancy has become a disease. The message needs to get out to boys and girls that teen pregnancy should be prevented. Teen pregnancy costs society and tax payers. Other states have used media campaigns stressing abstinence and they had a positive effect.

Testimony Against: (Human Services) Pregnancy prevention programs may use abortion as a way to reduce the birth rate among teenagers. Pregnancy prevention programs should not discriminate against birth control methods accepted by religious organizations.

(Appropriations) Anything other than abstinence will lead to an increase in sexually transmitted diseases. In the case of AIDS, this will mean death for young people. Condoms frequently fail as a method of birth control and do not provide adequate protection against sexually transmitted diseases. Contraceptives don't work and result in abortions. This bill will encourage sexual experimentation. Because the bill does not allow the Department of Health to discriminate between methods of prevention elected by communities in awarding project grants, the department will award grants to ineffective programs.

Witnesses: (Human Services) Peggy Johnson, Carline Lundmark, Citizens (con); Ken Bertrand, Group Health (pro); Theresa Conner, Planned Parenthood of Washington (pro); Laurie Lippold, Children's Home Society (pro); and Susan Patrick, Office of Superintendent of Instruction (pro).

(Appropriations) Suzy Tracy, Washington State Medical Association (pro); Cynthia Slurtteff, March of Dimes (pro); Theresa Conner, Planned Parenthood (pro); Lonnie Johns-Brown, Washington Alliance Concerned with School Aged Parents (pro); Jeanne Ward, Department of Social and Health Services (pro); Camille De Blasi, Human Life of Washington (con); Peggy Reich, Teen Aid (con); Kristen Morris (con); Carrie Abbot, S.H.A.R.E. (con); Jamie Schwartz, Citizens Alliance for Responsible Education (con); Marilyn Hatch (con); and Judy Perry, Carline Lundmark and Josh Scott, Crisis Pregnancy Center of Olympia (con).