

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1991

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As Reported By House Committee On:  
Human Services

**Title:** An act relating to the home health visitor program.

**Brief Description:** Authorizing the home health visitor program to address child abuse and neglect.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Flemming, Leonard, Karahalios, Kessler, Eide, J. Kohl, Riley, Dunshee, G. Cole, Veloria, Roland, Patterson, Wolfe, Wang, Johanson, H. Myers, Carlson, Dyer, L. Johnson, Jones, Quall, Rayburn, Springer, Holm and Ogden.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Human Services, March 3, 1993, DP.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 6 members:  
Representatives Riley, Vice Chair; Brown; Karahalios;  
Patterson; Thibaudeau; and Wolfe.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 4 members:  
Representatives Cooke, Ranking Minority Member; Talcott,  
Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Lisk; and Padden.

**Staff:** Jim Erlandson (786-7093).

**Background:** Under RCW 70.190, five agencies within the state function cooperatively with the Legislature as the Family Policy Council. These five are: the Department of Health, the Department of Social and Health Services, the Department of Community Development, The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Employment Security Department. These agencies provide a number of community-based programs that serve families that may be considered at high risk of child abuse or neglect.

**Summary of Bill:** This bill requires the five agencies named above to work together to develop a program plan for the Home Health Visitor Program. The primary purpose of this program is to prevent child abuse and neglect through the provision of selected educational and supportive services to "high risk" parents of newborns.

Requirements for the program are that: it be community-based; it include early, hospital-based screening; it include an in-home outreach and support program; and it demonstrate effective coordination between the existing community-based service programs that also serve this population.

The program plan to be developed under this bill shall include: an estimate and description of the groups to be served; a detailed screening process; a description of the services to be provided; staffing parameters, evaluation methods and expected outcomes; and cost estimates for both a statewide program and selected site; and phased-in pilot programs. The plan is to be developed and presented to the appropriate legislative committees no later than December 1, 1993.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested March 1, 1993.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For:** There is a need for comprehensive planning to be done prior to program implementation, as well as a need for early assessment of "high risk" situations, and a coordinated approach from all providers in providing education and support services that would help prevent instances of abuse or neglect.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** (in favor) Ann Simons, Tom Nagier and Walter Pfal, Washington Child Abuse Prevention Association; Liz Dalton, Department of Social and Health Services; Laurie Lippold, Children's Home Society; Mary Frost, Department of Community Development; and Maxine Hayes, Department of Health.