

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1542

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**As Passed House:**

March 9, 1995

**Title:** An act relating to placement of children.

**Brief Description:** Modifying placement of juveniles, specifically addressing independent living.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Brown, Cooke, Dickerson and Costa; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Children & Family Services: 2/16/95, 2/28/95 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 3/9/95, 88-9.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Cooke, Chairman; Lambert, Vice Chairman; Thibaudeau, Ranking Minority Member; Brown, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boldt; Patterson and Tokuda.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Stevens, Vice Chairman; Buck; Carrell and Padden.

**Staff:** David Knutson (786-7146).

**Background:** When a child is found by a court to be abused, neglected, abandoned, or having a parent, guardian, or custodian incapable or caring for them, the court may order the child committed to the care and custody of the Department of Social and Health Services for placement in foster care. The agency charged with the child's care is required to provide the court with a permanency plan of care for the child. The options available for permanency plans include; return of the child to the family home, adoption, guardianship, or long-term relative or foster care placement until the child is 18.

**Summary of Bill:** The options available under the permanency plan for a child are increased to allow independent living for children 16 years of age and older. A permanency plan for independent living will include the services to be provided for a

successful transition from foster care to independent living. The court is required to make a finding that the services provided to a child transitioning from foster care to independent living will allow the child to manage their financial, personal, social, educational, and nonfinancial affairs. The department is prohibited from discharging a child to an independent living situation before the child's 18th birthday unless the child has become legally emancipated.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 8, 1995.

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

**Testimony For:** Independent living services should be available as an option for some older teenagers in foster care who will not be returning to their parents home.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Jennifer Strus, Department of Social and Health Services (pro).