

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 1849

Title: *An act relating to children with developmental disabilities.*

Brief Description: *Changing provisions relating to developmentally disabled dependent children.*

Sponsors: *Representative Delvin.*

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Meeting Date: *February 20, 1997.*

Bill Analysis Prepared by: *David Knutson (786-7146).*

Background: *Children with developmental disabilities who require out-of-home care are served through the Division of Children and Family Services in the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). In many cases, these children have not been abused or neglected, but require foster care because their parents are not equipped to care for them. A recent management improvement project recommended that the Division of Children and Family Services focus on children who have been abused or neglected and stop serving other children who do not meet this criteria.*

To qualify for federal foster care funds, Washington must provide a legal process to determine if a child is dependent and, if placed in foster care, has a routine judicial review of the placement. Children with developmental disabilities must be declared dependent to qualify for federal funds, even if they have not been abused, neglected, or abandoned. This can be a source of embarrassment to the parents of the child.

Summary of Bill: *Children with developmental disabilities will be served through the Division of Developmental Disabilities within the DSHS. A judicial hearing for children with developmental disabilities will be held when a child needs home care. It will be separate from dependency proceedings involving abused, neglected, or abandoned children.*

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *None requested.*

Effective Date: July 1, 1997.