

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2559

As Reported By House Committee On:
Children & Family Services

Title: An act relating to care for children with developmental disabilities provided by the department of social and health services in the division of developmental disabilities.

Brief Description: Redistributing responsibilities for care for children with developmental disabilities provided by the department of social and health services in the division of developmental disabilities.

Sponsors: Representatives Delvin, Tokuda, Cooke, O'Brien and Mitchell; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 1/30/98, 2/5/98 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Cooke, Chairman; Boldt, Vice Chairman; Bush, Vice Chairman; Tokuda, Ranking Minority Member; Kastama, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ballasiotes; Carrell; Dickerson; Gombosky; McDonald and Wolfe.

Staff: Douglas Ruth (786-7134).

Background: During the 1997 session, agency responsibility for the care of developmentally disabled children whose parents are incapable of caring for them was transferred from Children's Administration to the Division of Developmental Disabilities. A new type of agreement, voluntary placement agreements, was created to allow developmentally disabled children to receive the same services as had been provided to them by the Children's Administration pursuant to a finding of dependency. The agreements permit the child's parents to contract with the Children's Administration to place their child in out-of-home care.

This transfer did not give the Division of Developmental Disabilities the authority to provide out-of-home care services or services to prevent an out-of-home placement.

Summary of Bill: The Division of Developmental Disabilities will assume responsibility for developmentally disabled children who do not suffer from abuse or neglect and whose permanency plan does not recommend adoption. The department is instructed to consolidate all services currently provided by the Children's Administration for developmentally disabled children in the Division of Developmental Disabilities. The Children's Administration will transfer staff and equipment to the Division. The transfer of responsibility is to occur by July 1, 1998.

The Division is given the authority to provide, or arrange to have provided, home-based preventive and out-of-home care for children. These terms are defined.

A technical correction is made to eliminate statutory language that has expired.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This completes the transfer of the supervision and care of developmentally disabled children from Children's Administration to the Division of the Developmentally Disabled. It is an administrative change. This will allow the department to be more responsive to the needs of these children when their parents are unable to care for them. It makes good sense to place children who have long-term needs in a long-term care system.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Tim Brown, Director of Division of Developmental Disabilities, Department of Social and Health Services (pro); and Donna Patrick, Developmental Disabilities Council (pro).