

ANALYSIS OF HOUSE BILL 1620

Protecting vulnerable adults.

SPONSORS: Representative Enway and Parlette.

BACKGROUND: Elder abuse is widespread in the United States. It is a national problem with a frequency and rate approximately that of child abuse. Based on two national studies on elder abuse, 48 percent of the incidents investigated are substantiated. However, only one in five incidents of abuse or neglect are ever reported and substantiated by Adult Protective Services. In general, there appears to be a higher rate of female abuse victims. The National Elder Abuse Incident Study found that almost 90 percent of the elder abuse and neglect incidents are with a known perpetrator who most often is a family member. Two-thirds of the perpetrators are adult children or spouses. Rates of reported abuse to the state's Adult Protective Service Program have increased approximately 60 percent in the last three years.

Under current law vulnerable adults include: