

FINAL BILL REPORT

E2SHB 2588

PARTIAL VETO

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating domestic violence fatality review panels.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Tokuda, D. Sommers, Kagi, Boldt, Kenney, Dickerson, Ogden, Veloria, Haigh, Santos, Romero, O'Brien, Edwards, Constantine, Rockefeller, Miloscia and McIntire).

House Committee on Children & Family Services
House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Background:

Local Departments of Health are responsible for conducting child mortality reviews. The purpose of the review is to identify preventable causes of child mortality, including violence, so that these causes may be addressed.

A county coroner may hold an inquest if the coroner suspects that the death of a person was caused by unlawful means or suspicious or violent circumstances.

In 1997 Washington received grant funding from the federal Violence Against Women Act to create a model for a statewide domestic violence fatality review mechanism. Three pilot review panels covering five counties (Pierce, Spokane, Chelan, Douglas, and Okanogan) began reviewing deaths in 1998. A fourth panel was formed in Yakima/Kittitas Counties in 1999, and a fifth is being organized in King County. At least four other communities have requested help in forming review panels.

Summary of Bill:

Subject to available funds, DSHS must contract with an entity with expertise in domestic violence to coordinate regional domestic violence fatality review panels. The contractor is given various responsibilities to convene, train, and gather information for the panels. The contractor is responsible for compiling information, issuing biennial reports with recommendations to improve the system of response to domestic violence, and identifying patterns in domestic violence fatalities. The reports must be submitted to the Governor, the House Children & Family Services

and Criminal Justice and Corrections Committees, and the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee and Judiciary Committee.

Private citizens may request a review of a particular death by submitting a written request to the entity within two years of the deaths. The appropriate regional review panel may review those cases that fit the criteria established. Representatives of the contracting entity and the regional panels are immune from civil liability for activities related to reviews of particular fatalities when acting in good faith, without malice, and within established protocols.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 95 0

Senate 48 0 (Senate amended)

House 98 0 (House concurred)

Effective: June 8, 2000

Partial Veto Summary: The governor vetoed a section that would have rendered the bill provisions null and void in the absence of specific funding in the operating budget.