

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2610

Title: An act relating to residential services for children.

Brief Description: Ordering a study of residential services for children.

Sponsors: Representatives Dickerson, Ogden, McMorris, Doumit, Clements, Tokuda, D. Sommers, H. Sommers, Alexander, Kenney, Haigh and O'Brien.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Meeting Date: January 24, 2000.

Bill Analysis Prepared by: Deborah Frazier (786-7152).

Background: The Children's Administration of the Department of Social and Health Services provides residential care to nearly 17,000 children who are served by foster parents and group care facilities licensed by the administration. The administration licenses over 4,200 Children's Administration foster homes, over 1,700 private agency foster homes, and over 125 larger group facilities. Each month, approximately 7,500 children are in paid out-of-home care and an additional 2,400 children are with relatives.

Summary of Bill: House Bill 2610 directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) to conduct a study of the types of residential services provided to children in the care of the Children's Administration.

The study is to determine the numbers and percentages of children served in residential services, total expenditures and unit costs of each setting. The study is to describe the decision-making process for placement decisions and the extent to which the best interests of the child are considered. A review of best practices in other states and best practices promoted by national organizations is also required. Finally, the study is to determine the total expenditures and unit costs of prevention services and residential services in Washington, as compared to best practices states.

The bill requires the JLARC to report the results of the study to the appropriate standing committees of the legislature by December 1, 2001.

An appropriation of two hundred fifty thousand dollars is made from the general fund to the JLARC for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2001.

Appropriation: The sum of \$250,000.

Fiscal Note: None.

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