

SENATE BILL REPORT

E2SHB 1493

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, April 1, 1999
Ways & Means, April 5, 1999

Title: An act relating to homeless children and their families.

Brief Description: Establishing a collaborative effort to address the housing needs of homeless children and their families.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Tokuda, Boldt, Edwards, Lovick, Veloria, O'Brien, Barlean, Ogden, Conway, Schual-Berke, Murray, Dickerson, Kenney, Regala, Cooper, Stensen, Cody, Anderson, Santos, Rockefeller, Kagi, Edmonds, Lantz and Wood).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 3/30/99, 4/1/99 [DP-WM].
Ways & Means: 4/5/99 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Costa, Vice Chair; Franklin, Kohl-Welles, Long, Patterson, Sheahan and Stevens.

Staff: Lynn Hale (786-7430)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Loveland, Chair; Bauer, Vice Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Fairley, Fraser, Honeyford, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Long, McDonald, Rasmussen, Rossi, B. Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, West, Winsley, Wojahn and Zarelli.

Staff: Michael Groesch (786-7434)

Background: The Washington State Supreme Court in *Coalition for the Homeless v. DSHS* stated that the Department of Social and Health Services has an enforceable statutory duty to provide housing assistance to homeless children and their families and to develop and implement a comprehensive and coordinated plan for providing services to homeless children.

The Governor directed the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (DCTED) and the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to jointly develop the coordinated and comprehensive plan required by the Supreme Court's ruling. The plan will

be submitted to the King County Superior Court five weeks after the end of the 1999 legislative session.

Summary of Bill: DCTED is the principal state agency responsible for the state's activities for developing a coordinated and comprehensive plan to serve homeless children and their families. DSHS coordinates with DCTED on the plan to serve homeless children and their families and modifies its programs and services to address the needs of homeless children and their families. In dependency cases, the judge determines whether DSHS used reasonable efforts, including housing assistance, to avoid out-of-home placements or shorten the duration of an out-of-home placement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For (Human Services & Corrections): E2SHB is an important step forward in the state's response to the growing number of homeless families with children. The bill is the result of a carefully designed consensus to adjust and implement the Supreme Court's decision in *Washington State Coalition for the Homeless v. Department of Social and Health Services*.

Testimony Against (Human Services & Corrections): None.

Testified (Human Services & Corrections): Representative Kip Tokuda, prime sponsor; PRO: Lyle Quasim, Secretary, Department of Social and Health Services; Tim Douglas, Director, Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development; Seth Dawson, Washington State Coalition for the Homeless.

Testimony For (Ways & Means): The bill has been negotiated carefully by all parties and it is hoped that it will be sent to the Governor without amendments. The fiscal impact directly related to the bill has to do with data collection and surveys related to the extent of the homeless problem. Data collection should not be compromised by cost considerations; enough funding should be provided to develop an accurate count of the homeless and to support the development of performance measures for dealing with the problem. Some of the funding will be used for acquisition of computers for the shelters and training in the collection of data.

Testimony Against (Ways & Means): None.

Testified (Ways & Means): PRO: Seth Dawson, Children's Alliance; Kathy Kreiter, CTED; Beverly Wilson, DSHS.