

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 2684

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Human Services & Corrections, February 23, 2000

**Title:** An act relating to records that are accessible by the department of social and health services.

**Brief Description:** Clarifying what records are available to the department of social and health services.

**Sponsors:** Representatives D. Sommers and Tokuda; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Human Services & Corrections: 2/18/2000, 2/23/2000 [DPA].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

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

**Staff:** Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

**Background:** The Department of Social and Health Services has requested legislation to assist it in obtaining records of all types, which would assist them in investigating and handling child abuse and neglect cases.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** An exception is created to the confidentiality provision of federal law relative to education records. The Department of Social and Health Services can obtain education records from schools for minors who have been found dependent in an abuse or neglect case.

The education records must be added to a foster child's passport if the child has been in an out-of-home placement for more than 90 days.

The department must hold harmless any provider if the records it obtains for the passport are disclosed by the department without authorization.

**Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The department's request that it have access to all records is not adopted; the department can obtain all relevant records. The passport provisions and education records exception are added.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 30, 2000.

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

**Testimony For:** Providers have been reluctant to share records with the department. The department is required to have medical, educational, and other records available to foster parents and others caring for children who often have very complicated medical needs. This is a department request bill to facilitate the fulfillment of its duties.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Jake Romo, DSHS/CA; Laurie Lippold, Children's Home Society.