

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6398

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, January 31, 2000

Title: An act relating to boarding homes.

Brief Description: Clarifying the authority of the department of social and health services concerning boarding homes.

Sponsors: Senators Costa and Winsley; by request of Governor Locke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/25/2000, 1/31/2000 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6398 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Costa, Deccio, Franklin and Winsley.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: In 1998 the Legislature authorized the transfer of all regulations for boarding homes from the Department of Health (DOH) to the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). The transfer expires July 1, 2000, unless reauthorized by the Legislature.

In the intervening months, DSHS has reinspected all of the state's 493 boarding homes, revised inspection guidelines through a statewide public forum process, hired additional licensing inspection staff, and taken enforcement actions against over 140 boarding homes.

Concurrently, the Joint Legislative Task Force on Long-Term Care, also established in 1998, tracked the results of the boarding home transfer. In its January 2000 report to the Legislature, the task force recommended the transfer be permanent, with the qualification that state regulations of boarding homes never be so prescriptive that they ignore resident independence, choice, and dignity.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Licensing and regulation of the state's boarding homes is permanently placed under the authority of the Department of Social and Health Services. Standards for fire protection and enforcement remain with the Washington State Patrol, through the director of Fire Protection.

The minimum number of people for whom a boarding home can be licensed is changed from three to seven. However, any boarding home currently licensed for three to six persons may retain that license.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Language directing the department to regulate boarding homes based on resident outcomes was added.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 21, 2000.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2000.

Testimony For: The department is doing a good job regulating boarding homes and should continue permanently.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Duane Thurman, Governor's Office (pro); Pat Lashway, DSHS (pro); Kary Hyre, LTCOP (pro); Lauri St. Ours, Nor. Alfa (pro w/amendments); Nick Federici, WAHSA (pro w/amendments); Jerry Reilly, WHCA (pro).