

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1259

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, March 30, 2001

Title: An act relating to providing services for persons through twenty years of age, who are or who have been in foster care.

Brief Description: Providing services for persons twenty years of age who are or who have been in foster care.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Tokuda, Boldt, Kagi, Schual-Berke, Kenney, Lambert and Edwards; by request of Department of Social and Health Services).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 3/29/01, 3/30/01 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Costa, Vice Chair; Carlson, Franklin, Hewitt, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Long and Stevens.

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: The federal Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 allows states to extend Medicaid coverage to young people between the ages of 18 and 21 who were in foster care on their 18th birthday. The act also allows states to provide independent living services, including room and board, to young people up to age 21 who become age 18 while in foster care.

Independent living services are designed to assist young people as they transition to adulthood. Services may include: assistance with obtaining a high school diploma; vocational training; daily living skills training; and counseling. Approximately 100 youth up to age 21 are provided independent living services each month by the Children's Administration of the Department of Social and Health Services.

Summary of Amended Bill: Young people up to age 21 who have been in foster care are made eligible for the array of independent living services created by the federal Foster Care Independence Act of 1999.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The amending language describes what independent living services are and provides for program and recipient accountability. Services include: GED, vocational or technical education, employment, money management, nutrition, and goal setting.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Young people leaving foster care need assistance transitioning to adulthood responsibilities. They have lower levels of education and higher unemployment and can benefit from additional assistance.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Kim Senger, Children's Home Society (pro); Rosie Oreskovich, Assistant Secretary, Children's Administration, Department of Social and Health Services (pro).