

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5414

As of February 5, 2001

Title: An act relating to enhancing the department of social and health services' child abuse and neglect service delivery system through support services.

Brief Description: Enhancing delivery of child abuse and neglect services by caseworkers.

Sponsors: Senators Stevens, Hargrove, Long, Roach and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 2/8/01.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Staff: Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

Background: A fatality review team was convened following the death of Zy'Nia Noble. Zy'Nia was a three-year old dependent child, who was known to the Department of Social and Health Services. She suffered lethal blows to her body. The fatality review team issued a final report in November of 2000. One of the recommendations focused on caseworker caseload and work responsibilities. Caseloads currently average 29 per caseworker. National Accreditation standards recommend 20 cases per case worker. Much of the caseworkers time is spent completing mandatory paperwork and duplication of records.

Summary of Bill: The Children's Administration at the Department of Social and Health Services has a standard of one clerical support person for every social worker. Every supervisor has a least one paralegal assigned to him or her. Experience requirements are established.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on January 22, 2001.

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