

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5537

As Passed Senate, March 13, 2001

Title: An act relating to internet adoption.

Brief Description: Regulating internet advertisement for adoption.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Franklin, Hochstatter, Winsley, Regala, Prentice, Patterson, Rasmussen, Hargrove, Costa, Kohl-Welles, Long, Shin, Kastama, Fairley, Thibaudeau, Eide, Snyder, Kline, T. Sheldon, Jacobsen, Constantine, Stevens and Oke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 2/9/01, 2/21/01 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 3/13/01, 48-1.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5537 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Robert Antanaitis (786-7452)

Background: Advertising a child offered for adoption or the ability to place or receive a child for adoption is prohibited unless the person or entity responsible for the advertisement is: (1) a duly authorized agent, contractee, or employee of the Department of Social and Health Services, (2) a children's agency or institution licensed by the department to care for and place children, or (3) a person who has completed a preplacement form and received a favorable recommendation as to his or her fitness to be an adoptive parent.

An advertisement is defined as a communication by newspaper, radio, television, handbills, placards or other print, broadcast, or the electronic medium.

Concerns have been expressed that, with the increasing use of the internet in the adoption process, there may be confusion over whether electronic mail and web sites are considered communication through the electronic medium.

Summary of Bill: It is clarified that electronic mail and web sites are included in the definition of what is considered an advertisement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: If the underlying law is enforced, this clarification will help prevent unlicensed people from using the internet to advertise for adoption.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Senator Rosa Franklin, prime sponsor; Laurie Lippold, Children's Home Society.