

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5976

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As of February 20, 2001

**Title:** An act relating to maintaining grandparents' information with birth records.

**Brief Description:** Providing a procedure for maintaining grandparents' information with birth records.

**Sponsors:** Senators Prentice and Kohl-Welles.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 2/20/01.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Staff:** Chelsea Buchanan (786-7446)

**Background:** In some cases, adult adoptees and former foster children desire and are lacking information about extended family members, including grandparents. Grandparents are sometimes willing to raise their grandchildren, or establish or continue relationships with adult adoptees or former foster children.

Currently, 18-year olds leaving foster care receive copies of their vital statistics, including medical and birth records. Adult adoptees adopted after October 1993, have a right to their original birth certificates if no affidavit of nondisclosure has been filed. The state currently has a legal preference for placing children requiring out-of-home placement with relatives. In all three cases, location of relatives other than parents may be complicated by lack of information, including full legal names and other data that might help identify and locate relatives.

**Summary of Bill:** The Department of Health (DOH) must develop by rule a procedure for storing grandparents' information, either on a new section of the birth certificate or in a database only. For the purposes of this act, grandparents are defined as those persons listed as parents on the birth certificates of the parents.

Physicians, midwives, or their agents must request grandparents' information when getting information for birth certificates. They must inform the parents that providing the information is voluntary and that if provided, it may be used as contact information in out-of-home placement proceedings or by adult adoptees or former foster children. Grandparents do not have to give their permission for the information to be provided. The information may not be construed to affect the existing legal rights of any person.

The information requested must include the full legal names of the grandparents, their date and place of birth, and their current address. Any information voluntarily provided must be sent with the birth certificate to the State Registrar of Vital Statistics within ten days after birth.

DOH must develop a procedure to instruct hospitals, midwives, the Department of Social and Health Services, and local birth registrars of these requirements, and the fact that this information is available.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 14, 2001.

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