

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5995

As Passed Senate, March 13, 2001

Title: An act relating to information sharing among the courts, providers, divisions, and agencies serving dependent children and their families.

Brief Description: Providing for information sharing among the courts, providers, divisions, and agencies serving dependent children and their families.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Long, Hargrove and Stevens).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 2/22/01 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 3/13/01, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5995 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

Background: Zy’Nyia Nobles died from abuse at age three. She was a young child known to the Department of Social and Health Services. Her family was also known to the department. Upon her death, a fatality review team was established to review the circumstances of her untimely death. A report was generated by the team, and the department responded to the report.

The team’s findings indicated effective communication of meaningful information did not occur. Zy’Nyia was cared for by a number of providers, had a number of caseworkers, and never did have a permanent placement. The needs of the family were varied, which required contact with a number of providers and systems.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Social and Health Services is obligated to establish guidelines and use them to facilitate the communication of relevant information among those entities needed to effectively serve families in child dependency cases. The guidelines must comply with state and federal confidentiality and privacy laws.

Law enforcement must notify the Department of Social and Health Services when a child is present at the site of a methamphetamine lab.

The provisions in the bill shall not be construed to create a civil cause of action.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 15, 2001.

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

Testimony For: The department recognizes the need to communicate effectively to enhance public safety and the welfare of its clients.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Charles Shelan, Community Youth Services; David Stewart, Pierce Co. RSN; Marianna Conner, Children's Adm., DSHS; Laurie Lippold, CHS; Lonnie Johns-Brown, NASW.