

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6009

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, February 7, 2002

Title: An act relating to maintaining the residential parenting program at the women's correctional center.

Brief Description: Maintaining the residential parenting program at the women's correctional center.

Sponsors: Senators Kohl-Welles, Long, Hargrove, Costa and Winsley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 2/21/01, 2/22/01 [DPS]; 2/7/02 [DP2S].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 6009 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Fara Daun (786-7459)

Background: The Department of Corrections (DOC) currently maintains a residential parenting program at the Washington Corrections Center for Women. The goal of this program is to provide eligible incarcerated mothers with the opportunity to bond with their infants and gain the parenting and childhood development skills necessary for a successful transition into the community. Concerns about the future of this program exist because, under current law, there is no requirement that DOC maintain a residential parenting program at any correctional facility.

Summary of Second Substitute Bill: DOC must maintain a residential parenting program at its major correctional institution for women to allow eligible inmates to keep their infants during their incarceration. The department must provide an appropriate living situation for the infants, promote positive parenting skills, and facilitate transition services back into the community.

Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis. Eligible inmates must not be denied entrance into the program on the basis of indigence.

DOC must maintain a separate financial account for each infant participating in the program. Funds in this account may be used only for the infant's needs and expenses and equipment needed for proper infant care.

Second Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The second substitute bill updates a section number to reflect a change in its codification.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Working with inmate mothers and their children together helps prevent the cycle of criminality from continuing. This program creates an environment which encourages parent-child bonding between women inmates and their infants. This bill will ensure that the current program is maintained, while also allowing for it to be expanded in the future.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles, prime sponsor; Lynne De Lano, Department of Corrections (pro); David Stillman, Department of Social and Health Services Division of Child Support (concerns).