

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 1320-S

May 15, 2001

To the Honorable Speakers and Members,

The House of Representatives of the State of Washington  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to sections 11, 12 and 15, Substitute House Bill No. 1320 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to adult family homes;"

Substitute House Bill No. 1320 strengthens and improves the training, licensing and inspection processes for adult family homes. Adult family homes are an integral part of our long-term care system. I support the efforts to balance the need of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to ensure a high quality of care, and the need of providers for certainty in the licensing and inspection processes.

Section 11 of the bill would have eliminated the requirement that employees in adult family homes have food handler permits from the Department of Health (DOH). Instead, DSHS would have been required to include food safety training in its regular training and continuing education curricula. Asking DSHS to provide education on food safety and to enforce DOH rules is not efficient or effective. In addition, under current law food handler permits must be obtained within fourteen days of employment. The DSHS training must be obtained within six months of the date of employment. Food safety is too important to delay the training in this manner.

Section 12 of the bill would have required DSHS to work with providers and resident communities to develop opportunities for its staff to become familiar with the routines of adult family homes. This language is vague and unenforceable. It is also insulting to the agency staff, because it implies that DSHS employees are unfamiliar with the industry they are regulating. Opportunities for exchanges of information and experience can be developed without a statutory requirement. I encourage DSHS to take these steps but it need not be mandated by statute.

Section 15 is unnecessary because it sets the implementation date for section 11.

For these reasons, I have vetoed sections 11, 12 and 15 of Substitute House Bill No. 1320.

With the exception of sections 11, 12 and 15, Substitute House Bill No. 1320 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gary Locke  
Governor