

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1464

As Reported by House Committee On:
Children & Family Services

Title: An act relating to community-based and faith-based social services organizations.

Brief Description: Requiring department of social and health services to work with community-based and faith-based social services organizations.

Sponsors: Representatives Boldt, Nixon and Anderson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 2/5/03, 2/19/03 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to designate a liaison for community-based and faith-based organizations within each administrative region.
- Requires the DSHS to specify in its contracts that community-based and faith-based organizations receiving funds from the DSHS must not engage in specified activities and must meet specified requirements.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Darneille, Vice Chair; Boldt, Ranking Minority Member; Roach, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Dickerson, Miloscia, Pettigrew and Shabro.

Staff: Cynthia Forland (786-7152).

Background:

On January 29, 2001, the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (Office) was established by Executive Order. The Office has lead responsibility to strengthen and expand the role of faith-based and community organizations. The Office works with federal agencies, Congress, and state and local governments to promote

policy, legal, and regulatory changes to enable greater participation by faith-based and community organizations by improving the opportunities, capacity, and expertise of those organizations. The Office also works with the private nonprofit and for-profit sectors, faith communities, and neighborhood groups to promote involvement in community service.

Five Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (Centers) have also been established within the following federal departments: Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Education, and Labor. The purpose of the Centers is to coordinate department efforts to eliminate regulatory, contracting, and other programmatic obstacles to the participation of faith-based and community organizations in the provision of social services.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Secretary of the DSHS will designate a person within each of the administrative regions of the DSHS to serve as a liaison for community-based and faith-based social services organizations.

The liaison will be available to:

- Provide information to community-based and faith-based social services organizations relating to opportunities for the organizations to cooperate with the DSHS in providing community services throughout the state;
- Identify areas of need that are not currently being met in the state in which community-based and faith-based social services organizations may provide needed services; and
- Coordinate efforts to promote involvement of community-based and faith-based social services organizations to provide community services throughout the state.

The Secretary of the DSHS is required to include provisions in its contracts indicating that community-based and faith-based social services organizations receiving funds from the DSHS must not:

- Engage in discrimination that denies service to a potential client on the basis of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, national origin, creed, religion, or presence of a disability; or
- Engage in activities that promote conversion to a particular faith, institution, or cause, unless participation in those activities is voluntary.

The Secretary of the DSHS is required to include provisions in its contracts indicating that community-based and faith-based social services organizations receiving funds from the DSHS must:

- Define clear, measurable outcomes;
- Demonstrate their anticipated cost-effectiveness;

- Demonstrate broad community involvement, support, and partnerships; and
- Conduct an evaluation of their program outcomes.

The DSHS must achieve the purposes of the bill through existing resources.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The Secretary of the DSHS is required to include provisions in its contracts indicating that community-based and faith-based social services organizations receiving funds from the DSHS must not: engage in discrimination that denies service to a potential client on the basis of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, national origin, creed, religion, or presence of a disability; or engage in activities that promote conversion to a particular faith, institution, or cause, unless participation in those activities is voluntary. The Secretary of the DSHS is also required to include provisions in its contracts indicating that community-based and faith-based social services organizations receiving funds from the DSHS must: define clear, measurable outcomes; demonstrate their anticipated cost-effectiveness; demonstrate broad community involvement, support, and partnerships; and conduct an evaluation of their program outcomes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: (Original bill) This bill is consistent with the charitable choice provision under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, as well as the Preamble to the State Constitution. By increasing the involvement of community-based and faith-based social services organizations, the delivery of social services, including outreach and accountability under the WorkFirst program, can be guaranteed even in the absence or reduction of federal funding. Providing liaisons for community-based and faith-based organizations is consistent with the DSHS's policy. The DSHS recognizes the need to partner with the community, and has already made progress in that direction. The liaisons will foster greater participation by community-based and faith-based organizations, as well as a team atmosphere. These organizations can relieve some of the burden on the DSHS. Community-based and faith-based organizations operate on small budgets, allowing for little waste; utilize committed volunteers, who can have a greater impact on youth than a paid employee would otherwise have and who tend to make a long-term commitment to the organization; and are connected to the communities that they serve.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Boldt, prime sponsor; Ed Hidano, Department of Social and Health Services; Jill Esau, We Care NW; Brad Herman, Jacobs Well; Richard McGrue, Nations Social Services; Russ Johnson, Footstool Foundation, We Care NW, and Northwest Graduate School; and Martin Barrett, Young Life.