
Judiciary Committee

HB 3083

Title: An act relating to immunity for any person who cooperates with an investigation of child abuse or neglect.

Brief Description: Providing immunity for any person who cooperates with an investigation of child abuse or neglect.

Sponsors: Representatives Kagi, Boldt, Dickerson, Orcutt, Pettigrew and Darneille.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates immunity for persons who cooperate in child abuse investigations.

Hearing Date: 2/3/04

Staff: Sarah Shirey (786-5793); Trudes Hutcheson (786-7384).

Background:

Current law provides immunity for persons who in good faith report suspected child abuse or neglect, or testify in a judicial proceeding as to alleged child abuse or neglect. Two Washington appellate court decisions provided fairly broad interpretations of the immunity for mandated reporters. These decisions included doctors who did not report the abuse, but participated in child abuse investigations under the reporter immunity clause.

There is no provision in statute, however, that specifically provides immunity to persons who assist in child abuse investigations. Therefore, members of a multi-disciplinary investigation team may still be liable. In addition, neighbors, relatives or others who provide information to investigators may also be held liable.

Summary of Bill:

A person cooperating in good faith with a child abuse investigation is immune from any liability arising out of such cooperation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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