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ENGROSSED SENATE BILL 5379

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State of Washington

58th Legislature

2003 Regular Session

By Senators Stevens, Hargrove, Carlson, Regala, Parlette, McAuliffe and Winsley

Read first time 01/23/2003. Referred to Committee on Children & Family Services & Corrections.

1 AN ACT Relating to dependency petition hearings; and amending RCW  
2 13.34.115.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 13.34.115 and 2000 c 122 s 12 are each amended to read  
5 as follows:

6 All hearings (~~(may)~~) shall be public, and conducted at any time or  
7 place within the limits of the county(~~(, and such cases may not be~~  
8 ~~heard in conjunction with other business of any other division of the~~  
9 ~~superior court. The public shall be excluded, and only such persons~~  
10 ~~may be admitted who are found by the judge to have a direct interest in~~  
11 ~~the case or in the work of the court. Unless the court states on the~~  
12 ~~record the reasons to disallow attendance, the court shall allow a~~  
13 ~~child's relatives and, if a child resides in foster care, the child's~~  
14 ~~foster parent, to attend all hearings and proceedings pertaining to the~~  
15 ~~child for the sole purpose of providing oral and written information~~  
16 ~~about the child and the child's welfare to the court)).~~

17 If the court finds that there is reasonable cause to believe that  
18 the health, safety, or welfare of the child would be jeopardized by

1 conducting a public hearing, the court may exclude the public. In  
2 addition, both parents may request that the court exclude the public,  
3 subject to the court's discretion.

4 Stenographic notes or any device which accurately records the  
5 proceedings may be required as provided in other civil cases pursuant  
6 to RCW 2.32.200.

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