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

18 If the court finds that there is reasonable cause to believe that  
19 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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