

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2895

As Passed House:

February 13, 2006

Title: An act relating to protecting vulnerable adults from exposure to methamphetamine manufacturing.

Brief Description: Protecting vulnerable adults from exposure to methamphetamine manufacturing.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Children & Family Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Lovick, Curtis, Ericks, O'Brien, Dunshee, Kessler, Blake, Clibborn, McCoy, Miloscia, Ahern, Roberts, McDermott, Hunt, McDonald, Williams, Haler, McCune, Kenney, Morrell, Wallace, Kilmer, Green, Springer, Ormsby and Woods).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 1/25/06, 2/1/06 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/13/06, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Expands the definition of *neglect* under the state's vulnerable adults statute to include exposure to methamphetamine or the manufacture of it.

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; Roberts, Vice Chair; Walsh, Ranking Minority Member; Hinkle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Darneille, Dickerson, Dunn, Haler and Pettigrew.

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

In 1999, the Legislature consolidated into one chapter various provisions relating to the protection of vulnerable adults. The purpose of the vulnerable adults chapter is to provide the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and law enforcement agencies with authority to investigate complaints of abandonment, abuse, financial exploitation, or neglect

of vulnerable adults. The vulnerable adults chapter includes mandatory reporting and investigations of allegations of neglect or abuse of vulnerable adults.

A vulnerable adult includes a person who:

- (1) is age 60 years and over who has a functional, physical, or mental inability for self-care;
- (2) has been found to be incapacitated;
- (3) have a developmental disability;
- (4) resides in a nursing home, adult family home, residential habilitation center, or other licensed facility; or
- (5) is receiving hospice or home health services.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill:

The definition of *neglect* within the vulnerable adult statute is expanded to include exposure to methamphetamine, or exposure to ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, anhydrous ammonia, or iodine when those substances are being used in the manufacture of methamphetamine.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: We have a meth plague in our state. The physical dangers of methamphetamine manufacturing are well-documented, including toxic fumes, explosions, and fires. What's more, those who live under the care of methamphetamine makers are much more likely to be abused, neglected, and to live in unsanitary conditions. As you know, we have taken steps to protect children from meth manufacturers. This bill addresses another group who, all too often, falls victim to meth makers. Vulnerable adults are dependent upon their care givers and have few avenues of relief available to them. This bill gives prosecutors one more tool to use against meth makers. This is a small, but important, step.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Lovick, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.