
SENATE BILL 5407

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By Senators Delvin, Hargrove, Regala, Roach, Kohl-Welles, Keiser, Kline and McAuliffe

Read first time 01/24/2005. Referred to Committee on Human Services & Corrections.

1 AN ACT Relating to children of incarcerated parents; and creating
2 new sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that children of
5 incarcerated parents face significant obstacles in their lives. In
6 many cases, these children have witnessed the arrest of a parent, face
7 unstable living arrangements and multiple school placements, live under
8 financial hardship, and experience the social stigma associated with
9 their parents' incarceration. As a result of these factors, children
10 of incarcerated parents are at risk for poor academic achievement,
11 substance abuse, and delinquency and criminal activity that can lead to
12 their own incarceration.

13 The legislature intends to support children in the state whose
14 parents are incarcerated by encouraging the state agencies involved
15 with families of individuals who are incarcerated to coordinate and
16 expand existing services for these families in order to improve the
17 well-being of children of incarcerated parents both over the short term
18 and the long term.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The department of corrections, in
2 partnership with the department of social and health services, shall
3 establish an oversight committee to develop a comprehensive interagency
4 plan to provide the necessary services and supports for the children of
5 this state whose parents are incarcerated in jail or prison.

6 (2) The interagency plan shall include the following:

7 (a) Identification of existing state services and programs, as well
8 as recognized community-based services and programs, for children whose
9 parents are incarcerated;

10 (b) Identification of methods to improve collaboration and
11 coordination of existing services and programs;

12 (c) Recommendations concerning new services and programs for
13 children whose parents are incarcerated, involving both interagency and
14 community-based efforts; and

15 (d) Identification of evidence-based practices and areas for
16 further research to support the long-term provision of services and
17 programs for children whose parents are incarcerated, including the
18 following:

19 (i) Identification and ongoing collection of data relating to
20 incarcerated individuals in the state who have children under eighteen
21 years of age; and

22 (ii) Identification and sharing of information relating to children
23 of incarcerated parents who are involved in the juvenile justice or
24 child welfare systems, to the extent permissible under state and
25 federal law.

26 (3) The oversight committee shall include the following:

27 (a) Representatives with decision-making authority of: The
28 department of corrections, the children's administration of the
29 department of social and health services, the juvenile rehabilitation
30 administration of the department of social and health services, law
31 enforcement and jails, the office of superintendent of public
32 instruction, the courts, prosecuting attorneys and public defenders,
33 and community-based agencies working with families of individuals who
34 are incarcerated; and

35 (b) Caregivers of children whose parents are incarcerated.

36 (4) The oversight committee shall develop the interagency plan by

1 June 30, 2006, with an interim report due January 1, 2006.

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