

SSB 5431 - H COMM AMD

By Committee on Early Learning & Children's Services

ADOPTED 04/08/2009

1 On page 1, line 9, after "child." insert "Pursuant to RCW 13.34.060
2 and 13.34.130, placement of the child with a relative is the preferred
3 option."

4 Beginning on page 1, line 14, after "care," strike all material
5 through "and the" on page 2, line 3, and insert "and the department
6 cannot locate an appropriate and available relative, the preferred
7 placement for the child is in a foster family home where the child
8 previously was placed, if the following conditions are met:

9 (a) The foster family home is available and willing to care for the
10 child;

11 (b) The foster family is appropriate and able to meet the child's
12 needs; and

13 (c) The"

14 On page 2, after line 3, insert the following:

15 "(3) In selecting the placement for a child being returned to
16 foster care, the department shall give weight to the child's length of
17 stay and attachment to the caregivers in the previous placements in
18 determining what is in the best interest of the child.

19 NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 13.34 RCW
20 to read as follows:

21 (1) To provide stability for children in out-of-home care,
22 placement selection shall be made with a view toward the fewest
23 possible placements for each child. If possible, the initial placement
24 shall be viewed as the only placement for the child. The use of short-
25 term interim placements of thirty days or less to protect the child's
26 health or safety while the placement of choice is being arranged is not
27 a violation of this principle.

1 (2) If a child has been previously placed in out-of-home care and
2 is subsequently returned to out-of-home care, and the department cannot
3 locate an appropriate and available relative, the preferred placement
4 for the child is in a foster family home where the child previously was
5 placed, if the following conditions are met:

6 (a) The foster family home is available and willing to care for the
7 child;

8 (b) The foster family is appropriate and able to meet the child's
9 needs; and

10 (c) The placement is in the best interest of the child.

11 (3) In selecting the placement for a child being returned to foster
12 care, the court shall give weight to the child's length of stay and
13 attachment to the caregivers in the previous placements in determining
14 what is in the best interest of the child."

15 Correct the title.

EFFECT: (1) Clarifies that the bill is consistent with existing
statute regarding preferences for relative placements in child
dependency cases but does not create such a preference.

(2) Establishes that the second priority for placement of a child
returned to foster care is with a foster family with whom the child
lived previously if certain conditions are met, and adds this as a
second priority for placement in both the Children's Administration
foster care chapter as well as the child dependency court statute.

(3) Specifies that in determining which placement option is in the
child's best interests when a child is being returned to foster care,
attention must be given to the child's length of stay and attachment to
the caregivers in the various placement options.

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