

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5547

As Reported by House Committee On: Human Services

Title: An act relating to respite care for primary care providers of persons with developmental disabilities.

Brief Description: Concerning respite care.

Sponsors: Senators Hargrove, Pflug, McAuliffe, Oemig, Marr, Fairley, Kauffman, Franklin, Parlette, Carrell, Haugen, Kilmer, Jarrett, Pridemore, Shin, Kohl-Welles, Murray, Regala and Keiser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Human Services: 3/16/09, 3/19/09 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill (As Amended by House)

- Allows respite services to a family member if the family member resides with, is the primary care giver, and provides personal care in the home to an adult with developmental disabilities.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Dickerson, Chair; Orwall, Vice Chair; Dammeier, Ranking Minority Member; Green, Klippert, Morrell, O'Brien and Walsh.

Staff: Linda Merelle (786-7092)

Background:

The Individual Family Support Program, provided through the Division of Developmental Disabilities, supports families while caring for a family member with developmental disabilities in their home. Families may receive the following services:

- respite care;

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- therapies;
- home and motor vehicle modifications;
- specialized nutrition and clothing;
- transportation;
- training;
- behavior management;
- education; and
- recreational opportunities.

Respite care is a service provided to parents who live with and take care of their children with developmental disabilities. It allows these parents to have a "respite" from the demands of caring for their son or daughter 24 hours per day, seven days per week or to allow time to run errands and take care of other matters outside of the home. A parent may hire an independent care provider who comes into the home or takes the son or daughter on an outing. Under some circumstances, parents may take their child to a licensed facility for a period of hours. The number of respite hours allotted may vary. They may be taken pursuant to a set schedule, but more often, they are taken sporadically when the need arises. Only care providers who are parents are allowed to receive respite services through the Division of Developmental Disabilities. This committee passed a nearly identical bill, Second Substitute House Bill 1429.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Respite services would be provided for a sibling, grandparent, or other family member if that person, rather than the parent, is the primary care giver who provides personal care in the home of an adult person with a developmental disability. The family member must also live with the adult.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The amended bill clarifies that only a parent or a person who takes the place of the parent as the primary caregiver who resides with and provides personal care may receive respite services.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The language in the House bill is clearer than the language in the Senate bill. Hopefully, this bill will keep children out of institutionalized care.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Sally Coomer and Cindy O'Neill, Special Care Agency.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.