

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6465

As of February 3, 2016

Title: An act relating to implementing an alert program that allows residents to provide information to first responders pertaining to persons with developmental disabilities living at a registered address.

Brief Description: Concerning an alert program that allows residents to provide information to first responders pertaining to persons with developmental disabilities living at a registered address.

Sponsors: Senators Hobbs, Becker, Conway, Keiser, Jayapal, Dammeier, Cleveland, Hasegawa and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services, Mental Health & Housing: 2/01/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, MENTAL HEALTH & HOUSING

Staff: Kevin Black (786-7747)

Background: The Isaac Alert Program, which forms the basis of the program described in this bill, is a collaboration between the Isaac Foundation, Spokane Firefighters Local Union 29, and Spokane Fire Department, for the implementation of temporary caution notes for individuals affected by autism and other developmental disabilities with addresses in Spokane County. The service area includes Airway Heights, Cheney, City of Spokane, Deer Park, Fairfield, Fairchild Air Force Base, Latah, Liberty Lake, Medical Lake, Millwood, Rockford, Spangle, Spokane Valley, and Waverly.

The Isaac Foundation is a nonprofit located in Spokane, Washington, dedicated to enhancing the lives of the region's autism community. The foundation memorializes Isaac Lytle.

Summary of Bill: The Washington State Patrol (WSP) must administer a program which allows a resident to register the resident's address and provide information to first responders about a person with a developmental disability residing at the registered address. Such information must be provided to first responders in the event of a 911 emergency in the form of a temporary caution note describing if:

- the person is nonverbal or minimally verbal;
- the person is potentially combative in highly stressful circumstances;

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- the person is considered a wandering risk if not adequately supervised; or
- interior doors or windows could be locked, presenting a potential access issue.

WSP may expand the information that may be placed in an alert to include other pertinent information supplied by the resident concerning the person with developmental disabilities residing at the address. The temporary caution note must expire after 12 months. The resident may renew the notice by providing updated information.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 22, 2016.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: I have a child on the autism spectrum. My wife told me I have to drop this bill. The Isaac Foundation has a great idea in Spokane. We need to work out some technical details. When my son was younger he was nonverbal. I tried to provide my information to the local police department and was told they didn't want it because of liability. It would be nice to have a statewide program to address these needs. This is something that families and first responders need.

OTHER: I am a mother of two children with autism and co-created the Isaac Alert Program. This is a four-phase program called "Autism in the Wild," a first responder training program. The program is currently being piloted in the city of Spokane. The first responder alert piece is currently operating throughout Spokane County via the regional fire dispatch center. The cost of implementation is being underwritten by the Isaac Foundation and private sector donations. We are testing different ways of reminding families to update their information within 12 months. At this point it is premature to implement this statewide while it is still being piloted and minor modifications are still needed. Please refer this bill for a work session for additional study. We don't want to see the program implemented before it is ready. The training for first responders is the most important piece, and is currently under review by the Department of Health.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Hobbs, prime sponsor; Diana Stadden, The Arc of WA State.

OTHER: Lieutenant John Goodman, Spokane Fire Department; Holly Lytle, The Isaac Foundation.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.