

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6560

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Early Learning & Human Services

**Title:** An act relating to ensuring that no youth is discharged from a public system of care into homelessness.

**Brief Description:** Ensuring that no youth is discharged from a public system of care into homelessness.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Darneille, Billig, Frock, Hunt, Kuderer, Palumbo and Wellman).

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

Early Learning & Human Services: 2/20/18, 2/23/18 [DPA].

#### **Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by Committee)**

- Requires the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and the Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs to develop a plan to ensure that, by December 31, 2020, no unaccompanied youth is discharged from a publicly funded system of care into homelessness.
- Requires the Department of Licensing to issue an identicard at the cost of production to individuals scheduled for release from a juvenile rehabilitation institution or facility within 30 days and individuals released from those facilities within the last 30 days.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & HUMAN SERVICES

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Senn, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Eslick, Frame, Goodman, Griffey, Kilduff, Klippert, Lovick, Muri and Ortiz-Self.

**Staff:** Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

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*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.*

## **Background:**

### Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Act.

The 2015 Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Act (Act) established the Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs (OHYPPP) at the Department of Commerce. The OHYPPP oversees programs serving unaccompanied and homeless youth and young adults up to age 24, including HOPE centers, crisis residential centers, and street youth services.

Among the goals established by the Act is the goal of preventing youth from being discharged from a public system of care into homelessness. The Act identified stable housing as a key component to successfully reducing and preventing youth and youth adult homelessness.

### Identicards.

The Department of Licensing (DOL) issues identification cards known as identicards. Identicards expire on the sixth anniversary of the applicant's birthdate after issuance, at which time they may be renewed. The DOL must issue an identicard to any applicant who:

- does not hold a valid Washington driver's license;
- proves his or her identity; and
- pays a \$54 fee, which may be reduced to the cost of identicard production if the applicant receives public assistance grants or is under age 18 and does not have a permanent address.

The current cost of production for an identicard is \$5. Minors may establish identity for purposes of obtaining an identicard by providing an affidavit of the applicant's parent or guardian.

Identicards are valid pieces of identification that can be used for:

- taking a high school equivalency exam;
- employment;
- requesting a Social Security number or birth certificate;
- applying for a passport;
- enrolling in postsecondary education programs; and
- opening a bank account or cashing a check.

### Juvenile Rehabilitation Institutions and Facilities.

Any juvenile offender adjudication that includes a disposition with a confinement period over 30 days is committed to the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) for placement in an institution or facility. Juvenile offender disposition confinement periods up to 30 days are served in county juvenile detention facilities. On July 1, 2019, the juvenile justice functions of the DSHS Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration will move to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF).

### Other.

A judicial proceeding is the process involved in a court proceeding that includes all steps in the enforcement, adjudication, or administration of rights, remedies, laws, or regulations such

as a hearing or trial before the court. A collateral proceeding is brought to address an issue incidental to the principal proceeding, and could include contempt of court proceedings.

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### **Summary of Amended Bill:**

The DCYF and the OHYPPP must jointly develop a plan to ensure that, by December 31, 2020, no unaccompanied youth is discharged from a publicly funded system of care into homelessness. A publicly funded system of care is defined as the child welfare system, the behavioral health system, the juvenile justice system, and programs administered by the OHYPPP. The plan must specify actions to be taken by state agencies and recommendations for legislative actions necessary to accomplish all parts of the plan. The DCYF must submit the plan to the Legislature and the Governor by December 31, 2019.

A declaration identifying the goal of preventing unaccompanied youth from being discharged from a publicly funded system of care into homelessness provides that this policy goal applies, beginning January 1, 2021, to any judicial proceeding through which the youth has been committed to the publicly funded system of care or in any collateral proceeding that involves the custody of the youth in that system.

Effective January 1, 2019, the DOL is required to issue an identicard at the cost of production to individuals who are:

- scheduled for release from a juvenile rehabilitation institution, a community facility for individuals committed to the Juvenile Rehabilitation division of the DSHS, a juvenile rehabilitation facility operated by the DSHS or the DCYF; or
- released from such a facility or institution within the last 30 days.

### **Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:**

The amended bill:

- extends the deadlines by one year for the submission of a plan to ensure no youth is discharged from a publicly funded system of care into homelessness and the stated goal of discharging youth from publicly funded systems of care into safe and stable housing. The plan and associated policy goal apply to unaccompanied youth;
  - replaces "public system of care" with "publicly funded system of care" and defines "publicly funded system of care;"
  - requires the DCYF to jointly develop the plan with the OHYPPP;
  - directs the DCYF, rather than OHYPPP, to submit the plan to the Governor and the Legislature;
  - removes the requirement for the Governor and the Legislature to respond to the plan; and
  - requires the DOL to issue an identicard at the cost of production to individuals scheduled for release from a juvenile rehabilitation institution or facility within 30 days and individuals released from those facilities within the last 30 days.
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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on February 23, 2018.

**Effective Date of Amended Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except section 2, relating to identicards, which takes effect January 1, 2019.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) An amendment should be considered to give the OHYPPP more time for the plan. The homelessness problem in our state is complex. It is unacceptable for youth to be homeless, and the state has a responsibility to address this problem. Over 35 percent of kids aging out of foster care will be homeless in three years. This bill is consistent with other activities going on in our state to address homelessness among youth such as the establishment of the OHYPPP and the DCYF. There is a new awareness that when a child is involved in a system, it is important to look at how that system can strengthen that youth and his or her family. The Washington State Institute for Public Policy is conducting an evaluation that will examine the data around children aging out of foster care. The bill adds dates to the goal of not discharging youth into homelessness, creating accountability for meeting that goal.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) In a given year, about 1,800 youth exiting public systems of care experience homelessness within 12 months. The OHYPPP is committed to serving these youth and is well positioned to carry out the responsibilities in the bill but would like additional time to complete the plan. There are studies underway now that could inform this plan, and additional time will allow for that.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Senator Darneille, prime sponsor; Jim Theofelis, A Way Home Washington; and Laurie Lippold, Partners for Our Children.

(Other) Kim Justice, Department of Commerce.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.