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**SENATE BILL 5260**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Christian and Braun

AN ACT Relating to emergency measures for managing juvenile populations at state juvenile correctional institutions; adding a new section to chapter 13.40 RCW; creating new sections; and declaring an emergency.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that juvenile rehabilitation under the department of children, youth, and families is dangerously overcrowded. Overcrowding is contributing to high levels of violence and drug use, and is impeding the ability of youth to be rehabilitated.

The legislature further finds that young adults may be better served by transferring their custody to the department of corrections. Such transfers will allow youth to access job programs and education, and place them closer to their families.

The legislature further finds that modern brain science demonstrates that as youth age they continue maturing and that as developing adults they should be given the opportunity to make decisions about their own rehabilitation. Furthermore, youth should be given the opportunity to form a vested interest in their own rehabilitation.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 13.40 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Any person, who is at least 18 years old and is placed in a facility operated by the department of children, youth, and families, may request that the person be transferred to the custody of the department of corrections. The secretary of the department of children, youth, and families shall coordinate with the secretary of the department of corrections and shall transfer any person who makes such a request under this section.

(2) Any person who makes a transfer request shall have three days to reconsider the transfer request. Following the three-day waiting period, the person shall be transferred from the department of children, youth, and families to the custody of the department of corrections within 10 days.

(3) The secretary of the department of children, youth, and families and the secretary of the department of corrections shall develop a form for a person to make a transfer request. The form must be made available to the person upon request. The secretary of the department of children, youth, and families shall inform all persons presently in its custody of the ability to be transferred under this section. Any person entering the custody of the department of children, youth, and families must be informed of the requirements of this section during intake.

(4) The hearing requirements in RCW 13.40.280 do not apply to a person transferred to the department of corrections under this section.

(5) A juvenile offender transferred pursuant to this section may not remain in an institution operated by the department of corrections beyond the maximum term of confinement imposed by the juvenile court.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act may be known and cited as the Youth Rehabilitation Pathways Act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately.

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