

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6245

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, January 25, 1996

Title: An act relating to child death investigations.

Brief Description: Requiring child death investigations and reports.

Sponsors: Senators Thibaudeau, Prentice, Goings, Wood, Sheldon, Winsley, Quigley, Wojahn, Smith, Fraser, Moyer, Franklin, McAuliffe, Deccio and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/23/96, 1/25/96 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6245 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Wojahn, Vice Chair; Deccio, Fairley, Franklin, Moyer, Thibaudeau, Winsley and Wood.

Staff: Joanne Conrad (786-7472)

Background: In 1995, the Legislature passed SHB 1035, requiring the Department of Health and the Department of Social and Health Services, along with coroners, medical examiners and others, to develop a process for consistent review of the unexpected deaths of minors in the care of DSHS. The group made a report to the Legislature in December, 1995. This bill represents the recommendations arising from that report.

Summary of Substitute Bill: DSHS Regional Administrators perform fact-finding, in the event of unexpected deaths of minors in the care of DSHS. After receiving the results of the fact-finding, a multidisciplinary community child death review team convenes to review the death. Results of these reviews are provided in an annual joint report to the Legislature.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Foster parents and the general public are added to the community child death review team. Hospitals are excluded from investigation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 10, 1996.

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

Testimony For: Better quality investigation of unexpected, unexplained child deaths is needed. Citizen input is important, including participation by foster caregivers.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Thibaudeau, prime sponsor; Don Knapp, Foster Parents Assn.; Rita Schmidt, Department of Health; Jackie Der, UW Medical Center; Ruth Kagy, Lauria Grace Fatality Review Team.