

2 **SHB 1397** - S COMM AMD

3 By Committee on Human Services & Corrections

4 ADOPTED 03/05/02

5 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
6 following:

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that relatives
8 increasingly are assuming the responsibility for raising the children
9 of their loved ones. The parents of these children are unable to
10 fulfill this responsibility themselves because of various and complex
11 reasons.

12 The legislature recognizes that these kinship caregivers perform a
13 vital function in our society by providing homes for children who would
14 otherwise be at risk of foster care placement. These homes offer
15 stability to children in crisis and enhance family reunification.
16 Outcome data shows that children in the care of relatives are less
17 likely to enter state custody, and most of these arrangements do not
18 require intensive supervision of the placement by the courts or by the
19 department of social and health services. The legislature recognizes
20 that kinship care is a legitimate and important component in the
21 spectrum of out-of-home placements available to children in need.

22 The legislature recognizes that these kinship caregivers face many
23 difficulties and need assistance to support the health and well-being
24 of the children they care for. These needs include, but are not
25 limited to, legal assistance, respite care services, financial
26 assistance, counseling, and other supportive services.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) Within existing resources, the
28 department of social and health services shall convene a kinship
29 caregivers working group subsequent to the release in June 2002 of the
30 kinship caregivers study being conducted by the Washington state
31 institute for public policy. The working group shall comprise:

- 32 (a) The children's administration;
33 (b) The aging and adult services administration;
34 (c) The economic services administration;
35 (d) Kinship caregivers; and

1 (e) Other stakeholders, such as the grandparents' coalition.

2 (2) The kinship caregivers working group shall:

3 (a) Review the Washington state institute for public policy kinship
4 caregivers study;

5 (b) Develop a briefing for the legislature that identifies and
6 prioritizes:

7 (i) The policy issues to be considered in making kinship care a
8 robust component of the out-of-home placements spectrum including
9 consideration of a financial means test;

10 (ii) The federal and state statutes associated with these policy
11 issues; and

12 (iii) Options for addressing these policy issues; and

13 (c) Submit the briefing to the appropriate committees in the senate
14 and house of representatives by November 1, 2002."

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18 On page 1, line 1 of the title, after "relatives;" strike the
19 remainder of the title and insert "and creating new sections."

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