

# Recommendations from the Joint Task Force on Administration and Delivery of Services to Children and Families



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE  
December 2005

**Legislative staff assigned to the task force:**

*Edith Rice*, Counsel, Senate Committee Services, Committee on Human Services and Corrections

*Sydney Forrester*, Counsel, Office of Program Research, Committee on Children and Family Services

## **Introduction**

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5872 (**Appendix A**) took effect July 24, 2005. This bill created a joint legislative task force to determine the most appropriate and effective administrative structure for delivery of social and health services to children and families. Consideration was to be given to a variety of organizational structures including those used in other states. Would an agency operating within a larger umbrella organization (as is currently the case in Washington state) be more effective than one operating as a separate agency or as part of a cabinet organization reporting directly to the Governor? How could defined lines of responsibility and government accountability be ensured? These were some of the questions to be discussed and addressed by the task force.

## **Membership**

Task force membership includes two legislators from the majority caucus in the Senate and House of Representatives, and two legislators from the minority caucus in the Senate and House of Representatives, for a total of four legislators. An academic professor from the University of Washington was chosen jointly by the chair of the House Children and Family Services Committee and the chair of the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee. This individual also served as chair of the task force. Other members include the Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services, an individual with experience as an administrator of a public agency providing services to children and families, a juvenile court administrator, a family court superior court judge, the director of the Office of the Family and Children's Ombudsman, a social worker with experience in the public sector serving children and families, and two representatives of community-based providers serving children and families. A list of the individuals who served on this task force can be found in **Appendix B**.

## **Meetings**

The task force conducted meetings on the following dates:

August 29, 2005  
September 19, 2005  
September 28, 2005  
October 12, 2005  
October 19, 2005  
November 7, 2005  
November 28, 2005

## **Mandate**

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5872 requires the joint task force to make recommendations concerning which administrative structure or structures would best realize efficiencies in administration and positive outcomes for children and families. This is to include recommendations concerning the costs, benefits, savings, or reductions in services associated with the administrative structures considered by the task force. Recommendations are to be reported to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2005.

## **Task Force Meeting Records**

Please note that audio recordings and written materials from each meeting of the task force are available by contacting Senate Committee Services staff at (360) 786-7414.

## **5872 Final Recommendations**

Task force members felt it necessary to provide some background and basis for the recommendations which follow.

The Governor appointed a new Secretary as head of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) early in 2005. A new Assistant Secretary was subsequently named to lead the Children's Administration. Task force members recognize that changes made at this level of administration are bound to have significant impact on agency priorities and direction. Members felt the need for additional time to observe agency progress before finalizing recommendations for agency administrative structure. DSHS and particularly the Children's Administration have come under increased public scrutiny for a variety of reasons in the last several years.

Contributing to these challenges are:

- A federal audit of child welfare services requiring an agency response and plan for improvements;
- a class action lawsuit settlement (Braam v. State of Washington) with ongoing oversight by a panel of advisers;
- several high profile child fatalities and subsequent findings;
- data management system challenges;
- budget management challenges;
- other legislative task forces with recommendations pending, have all contributed to the perception by members that it would be premature for this task force to issue final recommendations about agency administration at this time.

**In light of the preceding factors, task force members agreed to make the following recommendations:**

- 1. The Joint Legislative Task Force on Administration and Delivery of Services to Children and Families created by the passage of ESSB 5872 should be granted an extension to meet for an additional 12 months to gather supplementary information before making final recommendations.**
- 2. Membership for the Joint Legislative Task Force on Administration and Delivery of Services to Children and Families should be enhanced to include a member representing the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Office of the Public Defender and the Governor's Office.**
- 3. A one-half full- time equivalent staff or consultant position should be created and funded to provide support to the task force until the final recommendations are submitted.**

In continuing the discussion around administrative and organizational structure to support child welfare outcomes, the continuing task force should give appropriate analysis as to whether or not (and to what degree) a child welfare agency should be doing the following:

- Gaining control over key administrative supports ( personnel, contracting, information systems, legal support)
- gaining political access and promoting political will and commitment over time
- developing strong links to the critical services and supports for children and families outside the child welfare system (substance abuse, mental health, education, housing)
- developing the ability to effectively manage the local/county child welfare workforce
- attracting the strongest possible child welfare leadership team
- incorporating Family Policy Council principles
- promoting reinvestment of fiscal savings
- reforming its culture
- investing in prevention
- incorporating a community voice, sharing decision-making
- practicing consistency throughout the state, and
- incorporating caseworker input

## Joint Task Force Meeting Summary

<u>August 29, 2005</u>		
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker or participants</b>	<b>Article Reviewed</b>
Review of the Legislative Mandate	Joint Legislative Task Force Members	An Examination of Organizational Structure and Programmatic Reform in Public Child Protective Services - Charles Wilson, Washington State Institute for Public Policy (December 1996).
Review of Child Fatality Reports		Handouts from Children's Administration and The Office of Children and Families Ombudsman
Community Governance		The new politics of community-based governance requires a fundamental shift in the nature and character of the administrative bureaucracy - Gerard Bellefeuille (University of Northern British Columbia, 2004)
State Survey Chart		Child Welfare League of America - Programs administered by same state agency that administers child welfare programs, 2002. <a href="http://ndas.cwla.org">http://ndas.cwla.org</a>

**September 19, 2005**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker or Participants</b>	<b>Article Reviewed</b>
Public invitation to comment on issues of concern regarding delivery of services to children and families, and how these issues may or may not relate to the administrative structure of DSHS and the Children's Administration	Joan Sharpe - Executive Director of the Washington Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (funding concerns, prevention and intervention functions of the agency)  Danielle and Steve Baxter, Foster Parent Association of Washington State (foster parent involvement, burnout, appreciation)	See written testimony submitted

**September 28, 2005**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker or Participants</b>	<b>Article Reviewed</b>
Working Under the Umbrella (current operations)	Cheryl Stephani, Assistant Secretary, Children's Administration  Doug Lehrman, Area Administrator, Children's Administration (recently retired)  Gary Weeks, Director Labor and Industries, Washington State (formerly Director, Oregon Department of Human Services) - comments regarding agency organization	Power Point Presentation  See written testimony submitted

**October 12, 2005**

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Speaker or Participants</b>	<b>Article Reviewed</b>
Children's Mental Health	Timothy Truschel, MD Medical Consultant, Children's Administration and Medical Director, Evergreen Counseling Center, Hoquiam, WA (lack of funding for children's mental health services)	Handout, written testimony
Comments from the Office of the Governor	Kari Burrell, Governor Gregoire's Human Services Executive Policy Advisor (formation of cabinet for limited term, special purpose)	



**October 19, 2005**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker or Participants</b>	<b>Article Reviewed</b>
Community-Based Governance	Gerard Bellefeuille, University of Northern British Columbia	The politics of community- based governance requires a fundamental shift in the nature and character of the administrative bureaucracy (Children and Youth Services Review, November 2004)
Partners With Families & Children, Spokane, Washington	Mary Ann Murphy - Executive Director, Partners with Families & Children	Coordinating Care for Families
Children's Administration Service Delivery	Cheryl Stephani, Assistant Secretary, Children's Administration	
Dependency and Termination Equal Justice Committee Report	Joanne Moore, Director, Office of Public Defense	Dependency and Termination Equal Justice Committee Report, December 2003

**November 7, 2005**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker or Participants</b>	<b>Article Reviewed</b>
Discussion - Organizational Structure and Service Delivery	Dr. Herman Resnick, PhD. facilitator	
	Dr. Olivia A Golden, Senior Fellow, Urban Institute, Washington D.C.	Handout
Foster Care Appreciation	Bob Partlow, Program Manager, Foster Care Improvement Plan, DSHS, Children's Administration	Handout, written testimony
Changing Organizational Culture and Policy Norms	Cheryl Stephani, Assistant Secretary, Children's Administration	Handout

# Appendix

**A.** Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5872

**B.** Task Force Members

**SENATE BILL REPORT**  
**SB 5872**

As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Human Services & Corrections, February 24, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to creating a department of family and children's services.

**Brief Description:** Creating the department of family and children's services.

**Sponsors:** Senators Stevens, Carrell, Mulliken, Deccio, Finkbeiner, Delvin, Benson, Johnson, Oke, Hewitt and Schmidt.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Human Services & Corrections: 2/17/05, 2/24/05 [DPS].

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**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS**

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5872 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Brandland, Carrell and McAuliffe.

**Staff:** Edith Rice (786-7444)

**Background:** The Children's Administration (CA) and the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) are currently two separate administrations within a larger agency, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). CA and JRA are each lead by an assistant secretary who reports to the Secretary of DSHS. CA provides and oversees services to families with children regarding their safety and placement. JRA operates the state's juvenile rehabilitation facilities and related functions.

DSHS provides services to other needy populations through the Aging and Disability Services Administration (providing residential, home, and community services for these populations), the Economic Services Administration ( providing financial assistance through public assistance and employment programs, child support, and child care), the Health and Rehabilitative Services Administration (providing mental health, alcohol and substance abuse, deaf and hard of hearing, vocational rehabilitation, and civil commitment services) and the Medical Assistance Administration (providing medicaid, medicare, and related services).

DSHS was created in 1970 to combine the powers, duties, and functions vested in the existing

departments of public assistance, institutions, veterans rehabilitation council, and vocational rehabilitation. Legislative intent at the time, expressed a desire for the department to concern itself with changing social needs. Over the years since its formation, the types of services DSHS has provided to the ever growing and diverse population of Washington have expanded. The legislature has seen fit at different times to create separate and distinct agencies which were once part of the larger DSHS. Some examples are the creation of the Department of Corrections in 1981 and the Department of Health in 1989.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** A seven member task force is created to determine the structure for the new department of family and children's services. The Dean of the University of Washington School of Social Work must serve as chair of the task force and other members will be jointly chosen by the Chair of the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee and the Chair of the House Children and Family Services Committee. The committee must report findings and recommendations to the legislature in two reports, due by March 1, 2006 and November 1, 2006.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** Language creating a seven member task force to determine the structure for the new department of family and children's services replaces language that created the new department of family and children's services.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 14, 2005.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** Yes.

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

**Testimony For:** This could improve services to youth. Its time for a change. CPS should not be investigating suspected abuse at JRA facilities. Restructuring could accomplish the purposes we support as set out in statute in the Family Policy Council principles.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Other:** We have concerns about the fiscal impact of this bill.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Jack Smith, Jerry Elliot, JRA and WFSE; Laurie Lippold, Children's Home Society; Kevin Glackin-Coley, Children's Alliance. OTHER: Laverne Lamoureux, Children's Administration and DSHS.

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ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5872

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1. AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2005 Regular Session

**State of Washington**

**59th Legislature**

**2005 Regular Session**

**By Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Stevens, Carrell, Mulliken, Deccio, Finkbeiner, Delvin, Benson, Johnson, Oke, Hewitt and Schmidt)**

READ FIRST TIME 02/28/05.

AN ACT Relating to creating the joint task force on the administration and delivery of services to children and families; and creating new sections.

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

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1 A joint task force is created to determine the most appropriate and effective administrative structure for delivery of social and health services to the children and families of the state. The joint task force shall study how best to ensure that an administrative structure has defined lines of responsibility for delivering services to children and families in need and the best means for the public to hold government accountable for delivery of those services. The joint task force shall compare the effectiveness of: Including social and health services to children and families within an umbrella agency, such as the current department of social and health services; establishing a separate agency for social and health services to children and families whose administrator reports directly to the governor; or creating a children and family services cabinet reporting directly to the governor. The joint task force shall, as part of the comparison, examine the administrative structures used in other states to deliver social and health services to children and families.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2 (1) Membership of the joint task force shall consist of the following:

(a) The dean of the school of social work at the University of Washington or an academic professor from a list recommended by the dean, jointly appointed by the chairs of the house of representatives children and family services committee and the senate human services and corrections committee;

(b) Two members of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, one of whom shall be a member of the majority caucus and one of whom shall be

a member of the minority caucus, and two members of the senate appointed by the president of the senate, one of whom shall be a member of the majority caucus and one of whom shall be a member of the minority caucus;

(c) The secretary of the department of social and health services or the secretary's designee;

(d) An individual with previous experience as an administrator of a public agency providing services to children and families, jointly appointed by the chairs of the house of representatives children and family services committee and the senate human services and corrections committee;

(e) A juvenile court administrator, jointly appointed by the chairs of the house of representatives children and family services committee and the senate human services and corrections committee;

(f) A family superior court judge, jointly appointed by the chairs of the house of representatives children and family services committee and the senate human services and corrections committee;

(g) The director of the office of the family and children's ombudsman;

(h) A social worker with experience in the public sector serving children and families, jointly appointed by the chairs of the house of representatives children and family services committee and the senate human services and corrections committee; and

(i) Two representatives of community-based providers serving children and families, jointly appointed by the chairs of the house of representatives children and family services committee and the senate human services and corrections committee.

(2) The dean of the school of social work at the University of Washington or the academic professor appointed from a list recommended by the dean shall be the chair of the joint task force.

(3) Staff support for the joint task force shall be provided by the house of representatives office of program research and senate committee services.

(4) Legislative members of the joint task force shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative members, except those representing an employer or organization, are entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

**NEW SECTION. Sec. 3** (1) The joint task force shall make recommendations concerning which administrative structure or structures would best realize efficiencies in administration and best achieve positive outcomes for children and families, including, but not limited to, the following:

(a) Reducing the number of children at risk for abuse or neglect and increasing the safety and well-being of children;

(b) Increasing the ability of families to care for their own children and reducing the number of children in foster care;

(c) Increasing placement stability and permanency for children in out-of-home care and reducing unsafe and inappropriate placements;

(d) Delivering appropriate and timely mental health services;

(e) Providing adequate and appropriate staff training and education;

(f) Promoting foster parent recruitment, training, and retention;

(g) Reducing the frequency and duration of sibling separation;

(h) Delivering adequate and timely services to adolescents; and

(i) Increasing responsibility and accountability for achieving goals.

(2) The joint task force shall also make recommendations concerning the costs, benefits, savings, or reductions in services associated with the various administrative structures considered by the

joint task force.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 4 The joint task force shall report its recommendations to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2005.

Passed by the Senate April 18, 2005.

Passed by the House April 7, 2005.

Approved by the Governor May 13, 2005.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State May 13, 2005.



## **Joint Legislative Task Force on Administration and Delivery of Services to Children and Families Task Force Members**

**Dee Wilson**

Director of the Northwest Institute for  
Children & Families at the School of Social  
Work, University of Washington,  
*Task Force Chair*

**Senator Val Stevens**

39<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

**Ruth Massinga**

President and Chief Executive Officer,  
Casey Family Programs

**Senator Debbie Regala**

27<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

**Mary Meinig**

Director,  
Office of the Family & Children Ombudsman

**Representative Shay Schual-Berke**

33<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District

**Ken Nichols**

Regional Administrator for Region 2,  
Children's Administration, DSHS

**Representative Maureen Walsh**

16<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

**Sharon Osborne**

President/CEO,  
Children's Home Society

**The Honorable Paula Casey**

Family Superior Court Judge,  
Thurston County

**Cheryl Stephani**

Assistant Secretary,  
Children's Administration, Department of  
Social and Health Services

**Bruce Knutson**

Juvenile Court Administrator,  
King County

**Cheri Wolfe**

Retired Social Worker