

HB 1406: Youth Seeking Shelter & Services



BILL OVERVIEW:

Youth Seeking Shelter & Services aims to create a pathway for certain youth and young adults whose guardians cannot be reached or whose family does not allow them to come home. They will be able to lawfully stay in a shelter for up to 90 days, during which a community support team will be formed for them. This may include behavioral health supports, family members, legal assistance, and supportive adults identified by the youth or young adult. The bill will also emphasize providing Family Reconciliation Services to youth and their families in these positions.

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT VOICE:

Youth and young adult advocates identified that not all youth and young adults are welcomed home or feel safe coming home. Creating pathways to safety and shelter are opportunities to connect youth and young adults to their community and resources. Youth and young adult advocates are determined to create a system that surrounds youth and young adults seeking shelter a team of individuals that work in the best interest of them and can help them achieve safety and well-being.

BILL SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS:

- Sponsored by Rep. Cortes, LD 38 (Snohomish area)

ACTION STEPS:

- *The Mockingbird Society is currently working with legislators to make progress on this bill this session!*

BACKGROUND:

- Conflict sometimes arises within a family unit that cause youth and young adults to seek safety elsewhere outside the home
- Youth and young adults under 18 are unable to lawfully stay at a shelter, and are only allowed to stay for 72 hours without parental consent
- Many youth and young adults run from homes that feel unsafe or unsupportive for many reasons, and they don't receive adequate supports once they get to safety
- Youth and young adults are not always provided proper Family Reconciliation Services by DCYF when they are experiencing crisis within the home

IMPACTS:

- Youth and young adults will be able to remain safe in a shelter instead of on the street and at-risk for unexpected and dangerous situations
- Youth and young adults feel more secure leaving an unsafe environment and feel comforted knowing a team will be set up to support them and their best interests
- Families will feel more supported through the Community Support Team and Family Reconciliation Services and able to improve safety and home wellness for youth and young adults
- Youth Seeking Shelter & Services will be a prevention mechanism for homelessness, substance abuse, sex trafficking, and additional vulnerabilities for youth and young adults

If you know of any potential community partners or supporters for this topic, please contact Mockingbird's Acting Public Policy Director / Lobbyist at sam@sdmartinconsulting.com