



## 2SHB 2389: Failing Our Youth, Failing Public Safety

Equitable, Meaningful Juvenile Rehabilitation Requires Capacity, Resources, and Meaningful Collaboration

### Counties Oppose 2SHB 2389 Because It:



#### 1. Leaves Youth Needs Unmet

Transferring youth with more serious and complex treatment and supervision needs from state facilities to counties would place significant strain on already limited programs and finite resources. Positive outcomes depend on having adequate capacity and adequate funding to serve them in a meaningful way.

#### 3. Potential Reopening of Litigation

After WSAC filed a lawsuit to stop DCYF from placing youth in county facilities without county agreement, the State changed course and reached an agreement to avoid further legal action. This bill breaks that agreement. **WSAC views this bill as a violation of that agreement and may seek to reopen the case if it is signed into law.**



#### 2. Weakens Public Safety

Placing youth convicted of violent offenses into local probation programs that are already at capacity and underfunded, and back into unstable environments, is short-sighted and potentially dangerous.

#### 4. No Stakeholdering

This bill fundamentally changes the JR system in our state, placing enormous responsibilities on counties – responsibilities for which we do not have existing adequate systems or facilities. Counties were not even consulted in the drafting of this bill.



### Fiscal Impact: Another Major Unfunded Cost This bill creates immediate fiscal exposure for counties:

**\$35,000 Annual Cost Per Youth:** Increased community placement for disposition alternatives shifts costs to counties – averaging \$96/day per youth – with no state offset.

**\$60,000 Annual Cost Per Individual:** New costs for community supervision of individuals following a mid-sentence review hearing shifts costs to counties from JR – averaging \$164/day per individual - with no state offset.

**Indeterminate Liability:** Concurrent jurisdiction creates new legal and financial liability for counties regarding release decisions.

**Increased Workload:** Mandatory midpoint reviews and contested hearings will immediately drive up judicial workloads.

**\$11,719 Per Appeal:** Expanded appeal eligibility will increase caseloads, driving up system-wide costs.

**Right to Counsel:** The right to counsel for individuals at a mid-sentence review hearing will drive up county costs for mandated attorney appointments at a time when many counties are already facing acute public attorney shortages.

### OUR REQUEST

**Counties ask that 2SHB 2389 not move forward at this time.**

While counties support the goals and outcomes the bill seeks to achieve, success will require meaningful collaboration and significant State investment in county programs, resources, and services. Counties urge the Legislature to engage stakeholders during the interim to develop a coordinated reform of the juvenile justice system and sentencing grid.

