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**HOUSE BILL 1639**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Ortiz-Self, Dent, Frame, Kagi, Goodman, Fey, and Doglio

AN ACT Relating to creating a specialized child care pilot program for vulnerable children; adding a new section to chapter 43.215 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that children in early learning and child care programs who exhibit antisocial behavior, including violence, verbal or physical abuse, or other challenging behavior, are expelled at three times the rate of children in K-12 environments.

The legislature further finds that training on trauma-informed care will help teachers and administrators better serve most children, however some children may need access to more intense care and treatment. Developing specialized care and interventions for very high needs children throughout our state is critical in ensuring that these children are ready to enter kindergarten.

Therefore, in order to make informed and research-based investments in early learning and child care, the legislature intends to establish a pilot program for the department of early learning to explore the results of specialized child care for children from birth to five years of age.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.215 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Beginning September 1, 2017, the department must establish a two-year pilot program in four licensed child care facilities to provide multitiered behavior support, including specialized trauma informed care, for children from birth to five years of age.

(2) The pilot sites must:

(a) Reserve at least fifty percent of their slots for children who have experienced an adverse childhood experience as defined in RCW 70.305.010;

(b) Participate in an evaluation study at the end of the pilot program to assess the effectiveness of the program;

(c) Agree to a nonexpulsion policy for children;

(d) Keep records on social, emotional, and behavioral development for the children participating in the program; and

(e) Keep records on discipline outcomes for the children participating in the program.

(3) The department must select pilot sites that equally represent urban and rural areas. The department must select at least one site located east of the Cascade mountains and at least one site located west of the Cascade mountains.

(4) The department must submit an evaluation of the results of the pilot program to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature in accordance with RCW 43.01.036 by December 1, 2019.

(5) The department must design the pilot program and evaluation report in such a way as to be able to report on:

(a) The optimal staffing levels and necessary staff support for effectively working with high needs children in a child care or early learning environment;

(b) Necessary support for children's families in order to ensure child success;

(c) Recommendations for how best to transition children to other schools or programs; and

(d) How to best serve high needs children across the state.

(6) For the purposes of this section, "multitiered behavior support" means a framework of progressive interventions and positive behavioral supports that address a child's social and emotional needs.

(7) This section expires January 1, 2020.

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