

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2476

As Reported By House Committee On:
Children & Family Services

Title: An act relating to requiring a determination of paternity for receiving certain benefits.

Brief Description: Requiring a determination of paternity for receiving certain benefits.

Sponsors: Representatives Boldt, Mulliken, Stevens, Beeksma, Cooke and Goldsmith.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 1/23/96, 1/26/96 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Cooke, Chairman; Lambert, Vice Chairman; Stevens, Vice Chairman; Tokuda, Ranking Minority Member; Brown, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boldt; Buck; Dickerson; Patterson and Sterk.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Carrell.

Staff: David Knutson (786-7146).

Background: As a condition of initial and ongoing eligibility for the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program, each applicant or recipient is required to assign his or her interest in any support obligation to the Office of Support Enforcement. The applicant or recipient is also required to cooperate with the Department of Social and Health Services as a continuing condition of eligibility unless the applicant or recipient has good cause not to cooperate. Cooperation includes identifying and locating absent parents and establishing the paternity of a child. An applicant's or recipient's grant may be reduced or terminated if the Department of Social and Health Services determines the individual failed to cooperate.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Applicants and recipients for Aid to Families with Dependent Children are required to cooperate with the Office of Support Enforcement in determining the paternity of children in the assistance unit. Good cause exemptions

for non cooperation with the Office of Support Enforcement are provided. Failure to cooperate will result in the reduction of the grant by the adult caretakers's portion.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Applicants and recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children must cooperate with the Office of Support Enforcement in establishing paternity. Good cause exemptions for non-cooperation with the Office of Support Enforcement are provided. Only the adult portion of the grant will be reduced if the caretaker does not cooperate with the Office of Support Enforcement in establishing paternity, without good cause.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 17, 1996.

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

Testimony For: The paternity of children in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program should be established in all cases. This will aid in the collection of child support.

Testimony Against: There are some circumstances where determining the paternity of children in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program should not be attempted. These good-cause exemptions should be incorporated into the legislation.

Testified: (Pro) Bill Harrington, American Fathers; Glenn Yaconetti, father; (With Concerns) Sharon Case, Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence; (Con) Elizabeth Morgan, Division of Child Support; and Lisa Pearce, League of Women Voters.