

2231

Sponsor(s): Representatives Cooke, Tokuda, Chopp, Gardner, Kenney, Kessler, Blalock, Cody, Murray, Fisher, Conway, Cooper, Linville, Wood and Lantz; by request of Governor Locke

Brief Title: Implementing the personal responsibility and work opportunity reconciliation act.

HB 2231 - DIGEST

Establishes the WorkFirst program, the welfare-to-work program for temporary assistance for needy families. The department shall administer the program consistent with the temporary assistance for needy families provisions of P.L. 104-193. In operating the WorkFirst program the department shall require recipients of temporary assistance for needy families to engage in work activities.

Provides that the WorkFirst program shall be evaluated through a limited number of outcome measures designed to hold each region accountable for program success. The outcome measures used for evaluation shall include: (1) Exits through employment;

(2) employment retention rates; measured every six months for up to two years after leaving temporary assistance for needy families;

(3) reduction in average grant through increased recipient earnings; and

(4) number of recipients working part time and full time.

Requires the department to administer a child care subsidy program designed to serve families on Washington's WorkFirst program and those families who are at or below one hundred seventy-five percent of the federal poverty level.

Provides that the state shall exercise its option under P.L. 104-193, as amended, to provide benefits and services to legal immigrants under temporary assistance for needy families, medicaid, and social services block grant programs.

Requires the office of financial management to contract with a qualified and objective research organization to evaluate the critical elements of the program. Within available funds appropriated for this purpose, the research shall address the impact of the program in promoting self-sufficiency, in reducing poverty, and in improving the well-being of the families in this state.

Allows the department of social and health services access to employment security department confidential employer wage files, for statistical analysis, research, or evaluation of work force participation of department of social and health services' clients.

Establishes a program by which certain licenses may be suspended or not renewed if a person is one hundred eighty days or more in arrears on child support payments.

Provides for child support enforcement.