

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SHB 1935

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Adjusting eligibility for early childhood assistance programs.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on Appropriations (Originally sponsored by Representatives Tokuda, Boldt, Ogden, Schual-Berke, Lovick, Kessler, Kenney, Rockefeller, Murray, Scott, Edmonds, Conway, Kagi, Santos, Poulsen, Veloria and Lantz).

**House Committee on Appropriations**  
**Senate Committee on Education**

### **Background:**

The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) is a voluntary preschool program designed to assist eligible children with educational, social, health, nutritional, and cultural development to enhance their opportunity for success in the common school system. The target ECEAP population is four-year-old children whose family incomes are at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level.

The Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (DCTED) administers the ECEAP program through grants to local contractors, including school districts, educational service districts, local governments, nonprofit organizations, child-care providers, community colleges, and tribal programs. There are 292 program sites statewide.

Eligible children may be admitted to approved ECEAP programs only to the extent that the Legislature provides funds. For the 1997-99 biennium, the Legislature appropriated approximately \$60 million from the general fund for ECEAP purposes, supporting 7,032 openings for eligible children.

In fiscal year 1998, DCTED contractors turned away 1,396 ECEAP applicants for income-related reasons. As of the end of February, 1999, 8 percent of available slots in ECEAP programs were unfilled.

### **Summary:**

The family income eligibility requirement for the target ECEAP population is changed to 110 percent of the federal poverty level. The number of funded ECEAP slots continues to be determined by legislative appropriation.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House 96 0

Senate 34 14 (Senate amended)

House (House refused to concur)

Senate 46 0 (Senate receded)

**Effective:** July 25, 1999