

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2686

Title: An act relating to definitions of income and resources.

Brief Description: Updating definitions of income and resources.

Sponsors: Representatives Tokuda and D. Sommers; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Meeting Date: January 26, 2000.

Bill Analysis Prepared by: Deborah Frazier (786-7152).

Background: Federal regulation of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program permits states to set income and resources definitions for cash assistance. Under state law, and the federally approved Medicaid state plan, income and resources definitions for cash assistance are also applicable for medical assistance. The federal Food Stamps Program specifies certain definitions for income and resources.

Currently, some of the Washington income and resources definitions for TANF, medical assistance, and food stamps are inconsistent. These inconsistencies can result in confusion for assistance recipients and administrators.

Summary of Bill: House Bill 2686 amends public assistance statutes to:

- permit the Department of Social and Health Services to adopt rules regarding resources that may be considered for eligibility for cash, medical and food assistance;
- redefines the resource definition of "home" and "household furnishings and effects" to be consistent with federal food assistance regulations; and
- redefines the income definition to exclude in-kind income as countable income for cash and medical assistance, consistent with federal food assistance regulations. Also deletes redundant language and references existing RCWs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: None.

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

