

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

SSB 6365

Title: An act relating to apprenticeship and preapprenticeship training opportunities for WorkFirst clients.

Brief Description: Developing apprenticeship opportunities for WorkFirst clients.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Wojahn, Hochstatter, Fairley, Long, Deccio, Prentice, Hargrove, Thibaudeau, Jacobsen, Winsley, Costa, Kohl-Welles and McAuliffe).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Meeting Date: February 17, 2000.

Bill Analysis Prepared by: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background: An apprenticeship is paid on-the-job training that leads to journey status in a given trade. For example, the construction workers, as well as electricians, have apprentice programs.

The usual qualifications required to enter an apprenticeship program include reliable child care and transportation, possession of a driver's license, fluency in English, and the physical capabilities necessary to perform apprenticeship tasks. In 1999, the construction industry in Washington had 5,808 apprentices registered in state-approved union apprentice construction programs.

There are pre-apprenticeship programs to teach prospective apprentices the necessary skills for participation in an apprenticeship program.

Under the WorkFirst program, if a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipient does not find unsubsidized paid employment after the 12 week job search, he is required to engage in job-related activities. There are certain work-related activities that fulfill this requirement, including subsidized paid employment, on-the-job training, community service programs, vocational education, and providing child care services to an individual participating in a community service program.

Summary of Bill: A WorkFirst apprenticeship coordinator shall be appointed by the Employment Security Department. The coordinator's duties shall include creating more apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities for WorkFirst participants and ensuring sufficient support services are available to the WorkFirst clients.

The Department of Social and Health Services' caseworkers and Employment Security Department job service specialists shall inform WorkFirst participants that apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships qualify as a work activity— under TANF, and of the opportunities for apprentice and pre-apprentice training opportunities in both traditional and nontraditional fields.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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