

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6365

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor & Workforce Development, February 3, 2000

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

Brief Description: Developing apprenticeship opportunities for WorkFirst clients.

Sponsors: Senators Wojahn, Hochstatter, Fairley, Long, Deccio, Prentice, Hargrove, Thibaudeau, Jacobsen, Winsley, Costa, Kohl-Welles and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor & Workforce Development: 1/24/2000, 2/3/2000 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6365 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Hochstatter, Kline, Oke and Wojahn.

Staff: Elizabeth Mitchell (786-7430)

Background: Apprenticeships consist of paid on the job training which leads to journey level status in a given trade.

A person must generally meet certain qualifications in order to enter an apprenticeship program including: reliable childcare and transportation, possession of a driver's license, fluency in English, and sufficient physical strength to perform apprenticeship tasks.

Preapprenticeship training programs teach low-income women the skills they need to apply for an apprenticeship.

Few WorkFirst participants currently participate in apprenticeships and preapprenticeship training programs. There is concern that WorkFirst participants are not being made aware of these programs.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Employment Security Department (ES) is directed to appoint a WorkFirst apprenticeship coordinator. The coordinator's duties include creating more apprenticeship and preapprenticeship opportunities for WorkFirst participants.

Both the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and ES caseworkers providing direct service to WorkFirst clients must inform WorkFirst clients about apprenticeship and preapprenticeship training opportunities. The department must provide information about

apprenticeships at caseworker training, WorkFirst client orientation, and in written materials distributed to WorkFirst clients.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The position of apprenticeship coordinator is located in the Employment Security Department instead of DSHS. Both DSHS and ES caseworkers are directed to inform WorkFirst clients of apprenticeship and preapprenticeship training opportunities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Apprenticeships and preapprenticeship training programs are a good way to help WorkFirst clients attain livable wage jobs. Many skills are needed to attain an apprenticeship, and often clients need more time to master those skills than the 12 weeks that are currently allowed by WorkFirst. There is currently a high demand for apprentices.

Testimony Against: The Employment Security Department supports time limited programs with a near guarantee of placement in an apprenticeship. The department already has a coordinator in place.

Testified: PRO: Randi Loomis, Washington State Labor Council; Susan Crane, Office of Port Jobs; Gay Kiesling and Kathleen Mulins, ANEW; Tony Lee, Fremont Public Association; Robert Dilger, Washington State Building and Construction Trade Council; CONCERNS: Russ Lidman, Employment Security Department.