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**Early Learning & Children's Services  
Committee**

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**HB 2687**

**Brief Description:** Creating the home visiting services account.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kagi, Haler, Roberts, Walsh, Goodman, Dickerson, Maxwell, Clibborn, Seaquist, Green, Haigh, Johnson, Kenney, Moeller and Nelson.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Establishes the Home Visiting Services Account (Account) in the custody of the State Treasurer.
- Authorizes the Department of Early Learning to expend funds from the Account.
- Makes two appropriations of unspecified amounts from the General Fund to be used for state matching funds and state administrative costs.

**Hearing Date:** 1/21/10

**Staff:** Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

**Background:**

Home visiting programs deliver services in the home to parents and children and aim to alleviate the effects various family risk factors have on child development. Home visiting services share a focus on the importance of children's early years; the vital role parents play in shaping children's lives; and the belief that one of the best ways to reach families with young children is by bringing the services to them, rather than expecting those families to seek assistance in the community. Offering the services in the home eliminates barriers such as transportation and time and provides a more personalized experience by allowing families to interact in a comfortable and natural environment. Current research provides significant evidence of the effectiveness of home visiting programs as an early intervention strategy.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

In 2007, with the enactment of Substitute Senate Bill 5830 (SSB 5830), the Legislature directed the funding of evidence-based and research-based voluntary home visiting programs to support parents in development of parenting skills and to improve outcomes for children. Also included in SSB 5830 were legislative findings relating to:

- the research into the brain development of young children and the critical nature of child development between the ages of birth to 3;
- the difficulties children face in catching-up when their social, emotional, physical, or cognitive development is compromised in their early years;
- the significant number of children born into families with two or more risk factors that are linked to failure in school and beyond; and
- the longitudinal research demonstrating that parents and children receiving voluntary home visiting services exhibit better birth outcomes; enhanced child development and improved school readiness; reduced frequency and severity of maltreatment; higher rates of school graduation and job retention; and reduced welfare dependence.

### **Summary of Bill:**

The Home Visiting Services Account (Account) is established in the custody of the State Treasurer. Funds in the Account consist of legislative appropriations and all other sources, and may be used only for the following purposes:

- providing state matching funds for partnership activities to implement home visiting services and the infrastructure necessary to develop, support, and evaluate evidence-based, research-based, and promising home visiting programs; and
- administrative expenses.

The Director of the Department of Early Learning (DEL) is authorized to expend funds from the Account, and expenditures for administrative expenses are limited to legislative appropriation. The DEL is directed to contract with Thrive by Five Washington, beginning in the 2011-2013 biennium, to administer programs funded by the Account. The scope of programs and activities eligible for funding through the Account include but are not limited to:

- home visiting services to enhance child well-being; alleviate the effects of poverty on child development; reduce incidence of child abuse and neglect; and promote school readiness for young children and their families; and
- development and maintenance of infrastructure for home visiting programs, including training, quality improvement, and evaluation.

Organizations eligible to receive funding from the Account include:

- local health boards;
- non-profit, neighborhood-based, community, regional, and state wide organizations; and
- federally recognized Indian tribes located in the state.

**Appropriation:** For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011, an unspecified amount is appropriated from the General Fund to the Account for the purpose of providing state matching funds for approved home visiting programs.

For the fiscal biennium ending June 30, 2011, an unspecified amount is appropriated from the Account to the DEL for administrative expenses.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.