
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2106

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By House Early Learning & Children's Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Kagi, Roberts, Kenney, and Morrell)

READ FIRST TIME 02/23/09.

1 AN ACT Relating to improving child welfare outcomes through the
2 phased implementation of strategic and proven reforms; adding a new
3 section to chapter 74.13 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that extensive
6 research conducted by the Washington state institute for public policy
7 demonstrates the potential for appreciable savings in the state's child
8 welfare budget by deploying a core set of evidence-based and promising
9 programs designed to strengthen families and prevent children from
10 entering the foster care system and reducing the length of stay for
11 children who do enter the system. The legislature further finds that
12 achieving improved outcomes for child safety and long-term family
13 strength and well-being requires renewed thinking and a greater
14 emphasis on evidence-based and promising prevention and intervention
15 services, earlier positive engagement with parents and children, more
16 timely permanency outcomes, and more effective partnerships with
17 communities and private partners. The legislature also finds that the
18 goal of achieving lasting change in the state's child welfare system
19 requires building and sustaining the serving capacity of evidence-based

1 and promising programs through the reinvestment of savings from reduced
2 foster care caseloads. The legislature further finds that
3 implementation of these reforms should be approached through
4 collaborative analysis and planning that includes the relevant state
5 agencies, community partners, and other stakeholders. The legislature
6 intends to direct the development of a plan for the first phase of
7 implementation to begin January 1, 2010.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
9 to read as follows:

10 (1) The children's administration within the department of social
11 and health services shall collaborate with community partners and
12 stakeholders in two demonstration regions to jointly develop a plan for
13 implementation of a core set of performance-based contracts to provide
14 an array of evidence-based and promising prevention and intervention
15 services for families who are at risk for an out-of-home placement or
16 have a child in out-of-home care, and for children who are awaiting
17 adoption. The implementation plan must describe: (a) What services
18 should be delivered under the contracts in order to assure providers
19 have the flexibility to provide adequate, appropriate, and relevant
20 evidence-based and promising services to individual families; (b) what
21 outcome measures will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of
22 performance under the contracts; (c) how families will be referred to
23 contracted providers, including the protocols for continued
24 communication or coordination between providers and the children's
25 administration in order to assure child safety and well-being and to
26 promote the family's engagement; and (d) the optimum balance of shared
27 responsibility for child protection and child welfare between the state
28 and community-based providers, including a description of the core
29 functions to be performed by each. In selecting the demonstration
30 regions, the children's administration shall consider the capacity for
31 regionwide delivery of an array of evidence-based and promising
32 prevention and early intervention services to children and families,
33 paying particular attention to the research developed by the Washington
34 state institute for public policy; the willingness and ability of the
35 community and stakeholders to collaborate in development of a plan by
36 the reporting date; and whether the region includes any existing
37 multidisciplinary or multisystem work groups engaged in performance

1 improvement or reform efforts. The children's administration shall
2 report to the governor and the appropriate committees of the
3 legislature by November 30, 2009, with a plan to begin implementation
4 January 1, 2010. Not later than December 1, 2010, the children's
5 administration shall provide the governor and the legislature with a
6 status update and recommendations for continued progress.

7 (2) One or more knowledgeable representatives from the agencies
8 listed in this subsection, jointly, shall develop the procedures
9 necessary for the reinvestment in the demonstration region of savings
10 resulting from reduced foster care caseloads in the demonstration
11 region into evidence-based intervention and prevention programs
12 designed to prevent the need for or reduce the duration of foster care
13 placements by keeping children safely in their homes whenever possible
14 and achieving permanency earlier for children who do enter foster care.
15 The following agencies shall brief the governor and the legislature by
16 November 30, 2009, regarding the accounting, budgeting, and allocation
17 or other procedures developed to begin implementing the reinvestment
18 strategy beginning January 1, 2010:

- 19 (a) The caseload forecast council;
- 20 (b) The department of social and health services; and
- 21 (c) The office of financial management.

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