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**SECOND SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5493**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation (originally sponsored by Senators Zeiger, Darneille, and Walsh)

AN ACT Relating to convening local communities to reduce intergenerational poverty; and amending RCW 74.08A.280.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 74.08A.280 and 1997 c 58 s 315 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The legislature finds that moving those ((~~eligible for assistance~~)) living in poverty to self-sustaining employment is a goal of ((~~the WorkFirst program. It is the intent of WorkFirst to~~)) public assistance programs and state poverty reduction efforts. State poverty reduction efforts intend to effectively aid ((~~a participant's progress~~)) families and individuals with low incomes in progressing to self-sufficiency by allowing flexibility within ((~~the~~)) statewide programs to reflect community resources, the local characteristics of the labor market, and the ((~~composition of the caseload. Program success~~)) needs of those experiencing poverty. Success in reducing poverty, and the disparate impact of chronic and intergenerational poverty on particular demographic groups, will be enhanced through effective coordination and collaboration at regional and local levels, involving employers, labor representatives, educators, community leaders, ((~~local~~)) city, county, and tribal governments, and behavioral health, housing, early learning, transportation, and other social service providers.

(2) The ((~~department, through its~~)) department's regional and community service offices, through local service advisory and partnership boards, shall collaborate with employers, public assistance recipients, frontline workers, educational institutions, labor, ((~~private industry councils, the workforce training and education coordinating board~~)) workforce development councils, community rehabilitation employment programs, employment and training agencies, local governments, the employment security department, and community action agencies to develop work and work preparations programs that are effective ((~~and work~~)) in their communities. For planning purposes, the department shall collect and make accessible to regional offices and the local service area advisory and partnership boards established under subsection (3) of this section, successful work program models from around the United States((~~, including the employment partnership program, apprenticeship programs, microcredit, microenterprise, self~~-~~employment, and W~~-~~2 Wisconsin works~~)). Work programs shall incorporate local ((~~volunteer~~)) citizens in their planning and implementation phases to ensure community relevance and success.

(3) The department shall ensure that local service area advisory and partnership boards are established and provide staffing assistance to them. The local service area advisory and partnership boards shall meet at least quarterly and shall:

(a) Promote effective communication and collaboration among department local community service offices, local governments, and other service providers;

(b) Advise and comment on department program policies;

(c) Work to resolve local issues including client referral and service gaps;

(d) Review local data trends and public assistance client feedback;

(e) Propose innovative and evidence-based collaborative services; and

(f) Provide input for the plans developed under subsection (6) of this section.

(4) To reduce administrative costs and to ensure equal statewide access to services, the department may develop contracts for statewide welfare-to-work services. These statewide contracts shall support regional flexibility and ensure that resources follow local labor market opportunities and public assistance recipients' needs.

((~~(4)~~)) (5) The secretary shall establish ((~~WorkFirst~~)) service areas for purposes of planning ((~~WorkFirst~~)) programs ((~~and for~~)), distributing ((~~WorkFirst~~)) resources, and fostering local collaborations with community partners to reduce chronic intergenerational poverty in communities. Service areas shall reflect department regions.

((~~(5)~~)) (6) By July 31st of each odd-numbered year, a plan for ((~~the WorkFirst program~~)) local collaboration shall be developed for each ((~~region~~)) local service area. The plan shall be prepared in consultation with local and regional sources, adapting the statewide ((~~WorkFirst program~~)) services to achieve maximum effect for the participants and the communities within which they reside. Local consultation shall include to the greatest extent possible input from local and regional planning bodies for social services and workforce development. The regional and local administrator shall consult with employers of various sizes, labor representatives, training and education providers, program participants, economic development organizations, community organizations, tribes, and local governments in the preparation of the service area plan.

((~~(6)~~)) (7) The secretary has final authority in plan approval or modification. ((~~Regional~~)) Local service area program implementation may deviate from the statewide program if specified in a service area plan, as approved by the secretary.

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