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HOUSE BILL 1843

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State of Washington                      52nd Legislature                      1991 Regular Session

By Representatives Leonard, Winsley, Dorn, Moyer, Rasmussen, Basich, Spanel, Pruitt, Haugen, Belcher, Phillips, Anderson, Heavey, Fraser, Roland, Cooper, Grant, Prentice, Wilson, R. King, Scott, Chandler, Nelson, R. Johnson, Wineberry, Sheldon and Jones.

Read first time February 12, 1991. Referred to Committee on Human Services\Appropriations.

1            AN ACT Relating to services to children in poverty; adding new  
2 sections to chapter 43.36A RCW; creating new sections; and making an  
3 appropriation.

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

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.**            The legislature finds that providing  
6 comprehensive early intervention services to children in poverty will  
7 reduce and likely prevent later dysfunctional behavior. Because it  
8 costs as much to house a prisoner for one year as it does to put a  
9 child through twelve years of school, it is both a fiscal and moral  
10 imperative that early intervention strategies be developed. The  
11 legislature also finds that the local agencies currently providing  
12 services to those in poverty are best situated to reach children in  
13 poverty. Therefore, the legislature intends to expand the services  
14 provided by these local agencies by establishing and supporting an  
15 assessment and early intervention program for children in poverty.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**        (1) Any agency designated as a local  
2 community action agency or local community service agency under chapter  
3 43.63A RCW may apply to the department of community development for  
4 authorization and funding to operate a children's early intervention  
5 program. An agency applying for this program must:

6        (a) Currently operate two or more programs each serving fifty or  
7 more low-income families annually;

8        (b) Demonstrate prior experience in working with low-income  
9 families with at-risk children;

10       (c) Demonstrate a currently existing network of contacts with other  
11 resources in the community;

12       (d) Conduct an annual needs assessment that identifies the needs of  
13 low-income people in the local area; and

14       (e) Operate a board of directors or advisory board that includes  
15 low-income people, community participants, and local political  
16 representation.

17       (2) Proposals submitted to the department of community development  
18 must:

19       (a) Include funding requirements for the 1991-93 biennium;

20       (b) Include a line item to develop and distribute a local child  
21 and family resource guide that identifies local resources available for  
22 children;

23       (c) Include a line item for a well-documented evaluation of program  
24 outcomes, family by family; and

25       (d) Submit an action plan that includes agreements reached with  
26 other agencies in the community.

27       NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**        (1) The children's early intervention  
28 program shall include:

1 (a) Comprehensive needs assessments of low-income families.  
2 Organizations that show the ability to develop a consistent,  
3 geographically widespread assessment and evaluation design shall  
4 receive priority for funding;

5 (b) Identification of families eligible for comprehensive  
6 assistance as specified in subsection (2) of this section;

7 (c) Assignment of a family resource specialist to help eligible  
8 families with parenting skills and other care for their children, and  
9 help the family move toward greater self-sufficiency; and

10 (d) Provision of crisis resources, including one-time emergency  
11 grants, not to exceed five hundred dollars to any one family, when all  
12 other federal, state, and local resources have been exhausted or are  
13 not available due to categorical funding requirements.

14 (2) "Eligible families" includes families:

15 (a) With at least one child under the age of eleven;

16 (b) Whose income is at or below one hundred twenty-five percent of  
17 the federal poverty level, as adjusted for family size and determined  
18 by the federal department of health and human services; and

19 (c) Who are not being served by any other case management system.

20 (3) Services offered through the children's early intervention  
21 program shall not be duplicative of those offered by the department of  
22 social and health services or any other state or local agency.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The activities of the family resource  
24 specialist shall include, but not be limited to:

25 (1) Providing information and referral to resources within the  
26 agency, to the resources of agencies within the community, and to state  
27 and federal resources;

28 (2) Developing with the family a plan of action to help the family  
29 move toward self-sufficiency;

- 1 (3) Providing assistance in developing parenting skills;
- 2 (4) Engaging in follow-up activities to determine whether the  
3 information and assistance provided was useful; and
- 4 (5) Documenting the number and type of families served, the types  
5 of assistance offered, and the outcomes.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Agencies administering a children's  
7 early intervention program may enter into agreements with other local  
8 agencies for the provision of services to eligible families. The  
9 agreements may include the transfer or exchange of resources.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The department of community development  
11 and participating local community action or community service agencies  
12 shall report on the implementation of the children's early intervention  
13 program to the appropriate standing committees of the legislature by  
14 January 15, 1993. The report shall include identification of local  
15 agencies operating under agreements with the agency administering the  
16 program, as well as a compilation of the statistics generated by family  
17 resource specialists.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** The sum of eight million dollars, or as  
19 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium  
20 ending June 30, 1993, from the general fund to the department of  
21 community development for the purposes of this act. One hundred fifty  
22 thousand dollars of the total shall be set aside for the department of  
23 community development administrative costs.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** Sections 2 through 5 of this act are  
25 each added to chapter 43.63A RCW.