

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5573

As of February 14, 1995

Title: An act relating to job placement for recipients of aid to families with dependent children.

Brief Description: Creating a job placement program for public assistance recipients.

Sponsors: Senators Hochstatter, Moyer and Wood.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/17/95.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Joanne Conrad (786-7472)

Background: Some research suggests that enhancement of employability and a history of recent paid work experience may increase the chances of attainment of self-sufficiency for welfare recipients. In addition, "cultural" theories of welfare dependency indicate a relationship between work ethic and the ability to exit welfare. Economic studies show that barriers to employment may be a disincentive to many persons trying to achieve independence.

Summary of Bill: Values related to work and employment are stated. A three-year contract is established between the state and public assistance recipients, and includes a six-month review and a 33 percent benefit reduction for noncompliance.

Participation in the Job Opportunity and Basic Skills program (JOBS) is required, with federal "good cause" criteria for exemption. Participants must be drug and alcohol problem-free prior to participation.

The "Washington Full Employment Act" is piloted for three years, replacing AFDC and food stamps with mandatory participation in the pilot areas. A 23-member Full Employment Act Advisory Council is established, along with 11-member Full Employment Act Implementation Boards, to act as local liaisons.

Intensive case management, the development of community work experience programs, and an independent program evaluation component are established.

The stated goal of the Full Employment Act is to reduce caseload by 50 percent in three years, and reduce cost by 25 percent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 26, 1995.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 1995.