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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5031**

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**State of Washington**

**57th Legislature**

**2001 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Franklin, Thibaudeau, Kohl-Welles, Regala and Costa)

READ FIRST TIME 02/26/01.

1 AN ACT Relating to transportation for recipients of temporary  
2 assistance for needy families; adding a new section to chapter  
3 74.08A RCW; adding a new section to chapter 82.08 RCW; adding a  
4 new section to chapter 82.12 RCW; creating new sections; and  
5 declaring an emergency.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that families  
8 receiving temporary assistance for needy families face many  
9 barriers to economic success. According to recent studies, lack of  
10 reliable transportation to work and to school and child care sites  
11 is one of the primary barriers to consistent employment. Families  
12 without reliable transportation are faced with the struggle to get  
13 children to school and child care sites, and parents to work, in  
14 situations where public transportation is lacking or  
15 impractical. Families that own cars are sometimes unable to pay for  
16 adequate maintenance. The result can be losing a job because of  
17 poor attendance, another setback in a life of struggle.

18 Unlike some of the other, less tangible, primary barriers to

1 employment such as mental health conditions or alcohol or  
2 substance abuse problems, the lack of a reliable means of  
3 transportation can be solved in some cases, by providing the  
4 family with access to its own vehicle.

5 The legislature finds that other states have created programs  
6 called "wheels to work," to provide qualifying adults receiving  
7 temporary assistance for needy families with a method of acquiring  
8 a vehicle in order to stabilize their employment. These programs  
9 have met with some success.

10 The legislature intends that Washington establish a wheels to  
11 work program, as a public-private partnership, to provide  
12 qualified families on temporary assistance for needy families with  
13 the ability to own a vehicle. The legislature intends to study the  
14 costs and benefits of the wheels to work program.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.08A  
16 RCW to read as follows:

17 (1) The wheels to work program is established in the  
18 department. The program will accept donated vehicles and provide  
19 them for lease to qualified adults who are receiving temporary  
20 assistance for needy families at the time of application for the  
21 program. The department shall contract with a private nonprofit  
22 entity to operate the program in three locations, one in Pierce  
23 county, one in Yakima county, and one in Spokane county. The  
24 program shall be expanded statewide one year after implementation.

25 (2) The entity under contract with the department shall  
26 determine the acceptability of donated vehicles, based upon the  
27 needs of the program and the budget constraints of the entity. The  
28 entity shall only accept driveable vehicles, and shall not accept  
29 vehicles for parts or scrap, but may accept charitable donations  
30 of funds to use in the repair or maintenance of the donated  
31 vehicles. The entity shall assume title on acceptance of the  
32 donated vehicle, and shall provide a receipt for tax purposes to  
33 the vehicle donor.

34 (3) In addition to obtaining donated vehicles for the wheels to  
35 work program, the department may, at its election, choose to make  
36 interagency arrangements with state and local government motor  
37 pools in order to acquire government surplus vehicles for use in

1 the program. The department may also purchase vehicles from the  
2 commercial market for use in the program, if the vehicles meet  
3 recipient asset and resource considerations and are inspected and  
4 certified by an independent mechanic before their use by  
5 recipients. The department may coordinate with local community and  
6 technical colleges for the refurbishing and maintenance of  
7 vehicles.

8 (4) Upon donation of a vehicle and transfer of title, the donor  
9 is not liable for any damage, repair, emissions compliance,  
10 vehicle insurance, or determination of vehicle safety.

11 (5) To qualify for the program, an applicant must be receiving  
12 temporary assistance for needy families at the time of  
13 application; have a verifiable job or a bona fide job offer for  
14 which the vehicle is essential transportation; possess a valid  
15 Washington driver's license; and be insurable. The department shall  
16 certify to the entity that the applicant for a vehicle is  
17 qualified to participate in the program. Donated vehicles shall be  
18 available for a twelve-month lease for thirty dollars per month to  
19 participants. For the first six months of the lease term, the  
20 department shall cover the cost of the participant's car insurance  
21 premium. At the end of six months, the qualified participant shall  
22 provide insurance for the vehicle, and continue paying thirty  
23 dollars per month for an additional six-month lease term. During  
24 the twelve months of the total lease term, the entity shall  
25 provide all necessary repairs to the vehicle and ensure emissions  
26 compliance, except that the participant shall be responsible for  
27 normal vehicle maintenance. At the end of the twelve-month lease  
28 term, title to the vehicle shall be transferred to the  
29 participant.

30 (6) If the participant leaves employment without good cause,  
31 the participant has sixty days to find new employment or the  
32 vehicle shall be returned to the entity and the lease canceled.

33 (7) If the participant leasing the vehicle is convicted of any  
34 felony in violation of Title 9 or 9A RCW, or of a driving-related  
35 offense pursuant to RCW 46.61.502, 46.61.503, 46.61.504,  
36 46.61.520, 46.61.522, or 46.61.5249, after the inception of the  
37 lease, the leased vehicle shall be returned to the entity and the  
38 lease canceled. For the purposes of this section, a person has been

1 "convicted," whether in an adult court or adjudicated in a  
2 juvenile court, at such time as a plea of guilty has been  
3 accepted, or a verdict of guilty has been filed, notwithstanding  
4 the pendency of any future proceedings including but not limited  
5 to sentencing or disposition, posttrial or post fact-finding  
6 motions, and appeals. Conviction includes a dismissal entered after  
7 a period of probation, suspension, or deferral of sentence.

8 (8) The participant shall be the only driver of the vehicle  
9 during the lease term.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 82.08  
11 RCW to read as follows:

12 (1) The tax levied by RCW 82.08.020 does not apply to sales of  
13 vehicles to the department of social and health services or  
14 nonprofit entities for use in the wheels for work program provided  
15 in section 2 of this act.

16 (2) The tax levied by RCW 82.08.020 does not apply to sales of  
17 vehicles to qualified recipients by the department of social and  
18 health services or nonprofit entities under the wheels for work  
19 program provided in section 2 of this act.

20 (3) The tax levied by RCW 82.08.020 does not apply to the lease  
21 of vehicles to qualified recipients by the department of social  
22 and health services or nonprofit entities under the wheels for  
23 work program provided in section 2 of this act.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 82.12  
25 RCW to read as follows:

26 (1) The provisions of this chapter do not apply in respect to  
27 the use of vehicles by the department of social and health  
28 services or nonprofit entities for use in the wheels for work  
29 program provided in section 2 of this act.

30 (2) The provisions of this chapter do not apply in respect to  
31 the use of a vehicle by a qualified recipient if the vehicle is  
32 acquired by the qualified recipient under the wheels for work  
33 program provided in section 2 of this act.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The department of social and health  
35 services shall contract with the Washington state institute for

1 public policy to perform a study of the wheels for work program,  
2 including at the minimum a cost-benefit analysis, and an  
3 evaluation of the extent to which access to a personal vehicle  
4 enabled the family on assistance to progress toward economic  
5 independence.

6 The institute for public policy shall, as part of the pilot  
7 project evaluation, develop protocols for selection from the pool  
8 of WorkFirst clients eligible for wheels to work transportation  
9 assistance, in order to assure random assignment of clients and  
10 enable clear identification of the costs and benefits attributable  
11 to the pilot program.

12 The institute for public policy shall report to the legislature  
13 two years after the implementation of the program, on the progress  
14 of the study. The report shall include, without limitation, a  
15 comparison of program administration expenditures versus  
16 reductions, if any, in the use of welfare grants, food stamps,  
17 medical assistance, and WorkFirst support services, such as child  
18 care subsidies, clothing expenses, and other types of  
19 transportation assistance. Any participant benefits, such as  
20 increased earnings, shall also be included.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** If any part of this act is found to be in  
22 conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition  
23 to the allocation of federal funds to the state, the conflicting  
24 part of this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the  
25 conflict and with respect to the agencies directly affected, and  
26 this finding does not affect the operation of the remainder of  
27 this act in its application to the agencies concerned. Rules  
28 adopted under this act must meet federal requirements that are a  
29 necessary condition to the receipt of federal funds by the state.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
31 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of  
32 the state government and its existing public institutions, and  
33 takes effect immediately.

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