

VETO MESSAGE ON E2SHB 3141

April 1, 2010

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,
The House of Representatives of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning, without my approval as to Sections 1, 3, and 4, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 3141 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to redesigning the delivery of temporary assistance for needy families."

This bill directs significant changes to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF) known as the WorkFirst program. The WorkFirst program is an important safety net program for many of Washington's low-income families and children. As Washington addresses an economic downturn, our important and vital safety net programs must provide appropriate assistance to Washington residents. The WorkFirst program has been in existence for almost 13 years. In conversations with the Legislature, I expressed my support for reevaluation of the WorkFirst program to examine how to best meet the challenges for various Washington families to obtain work stability and family self-sufficiency.

Section 3 of the bill directs an executive cabinet level workgroup, the WorkFirst Subcabinet, to examine and report on the TANF program in the context of a reframed legislative intent set forth in Section 1. Section 4 makes a programmatic change in advance of any examination and report. The best way for an executive cabinet level workgroup to examine a broad, programmatic agenda of a \$900 million block grant program is under the direction of the Governor, without restrictions or initial assumptions.

Although I have vetoed Sections 1, 3 and 4, I am directing the WorkFirst Subcabinet to examine the best practices to meet the needs of WorkFirst families to obtain employment and achieve family self-sufficiency. The WorkFirst Subcabinet shall provide a report and plan to implement the best practices for WorkFirst families and children that are sustainable.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Sections 1, 3, and 4 of Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 3141.

With the exception of Sections 1, 3, and 4, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 3141 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Gregoire

Governor