

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1719

As Reported by House Committee On:
Early Learning & Human Services

Title: An act relating to updating certain department of early learning advising and contracting mechanisms to reflect federal requirements, legislative mandates, and planned system improvements.

Brief Description: Updating certain department of early learning advising and contracting mechanisms to reflect federal requirements, legislative mandates, and planned system improvements.

Sponsors: Representatives Lovick, Dent, Kagi, Senn and Frame; by request of Department of Early Learning.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Early Learning & Human Services: 2/7/17, 2/10/17 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Changes membership of the Early Learning Advisory Committee.
- Transfers the administration of home visiting programs from a nongovernmental private-public partnership to the Department of Early Learning.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Senn, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; McDonald, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Frame, Goodman, Griffey, Klippert, Lovick, Muri and Ortiz-Self.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative McCaslin.

Staff: Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background:

In 2006 the Legislature created a nongovernmental private-public partnership to support investments in early learning and ensure that every child in the state is prepared to succeed in school and in life. This partnership is known as Thrive Washington (Thrive).

Home visiting programs deliver voluntary services to children and families in the home or community and are designed to alleviate the effects of poverty and other risk factors on child development. The Department of Early Learning (DEL) contracts with Thrive for the administration of home visiting programs funded by the Home Visiting Services Account (HVSA). Thrive convenes an advisory committee to give advice regarding the distribution of funds from the HVSA.

The HVSA receives state, federal, and private funding for the support of home visiting services. The DEL may use an average of 4 percent of HVSA expenditures for program administration.

The Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) advises the DEL on statewide early learning issues. The ELAC has 23 members representing state agencies, the Legislature, leaders in early childhood education, and other stakeholders.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Responsibility for administering home visiting programs is transferred from the private-public partnership to the DEL. The percentage of HVSA expenditures that the DEL may use for program administration is increased from 4 percent to 10 percent. The legislative intent that 50 percent of the HVSA be matched by the private-public partnership each fiscal year is eliminated, as are the reporting requirements related to achieving the targeted match. The DEL must monitor and report periodically on both the uses and the outcomes of the HVSA.

The ELAC's responsibilities associated with assessing needs and availability of services, developing plans, establishing performance measures, and creating a statewide early learning plan are removed. The ELAC must contribute to ongoing early learning efforts and the provision of programs and services for children and families prenatal through age 5.

The ELAC's membership is changed to:

- remove the representatives of the Office of Financial Management and the Department of Social and Health Services;
- add representatives from the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP), a licensed family day care, a child day care center, the home visiting advisory committee, the Washington Library Association, the developmental disabilities community, early learning regional coalitions, and appointees from the state commissions on Asian Pacific American Affairs, African American Affairs, and Hispanic Affairs; and
- increase representation from sovereign tribal governments, including a representative of a tribal ECEAP or tribal Head Start program.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The legislative intent that 50 percent of the HVSA be matched by the private-public partnership each fiscal year is eliminated, as are the reporting requirements related to achieving the targeted match. The DEL must monitor and report periodically on both the uses and the outcomes of the HVSA.

The representative of the private-public partnership is reinstated to the ELAC. One representative from the developmental disabilities community and two representatives from the early learning regional coalitions are added as members of the ELAC.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a simple but significant piece of legislation. The membership of the ELAC is dictated by federal statute as well as state statute, and members currently do not reflect the stakeholders in the field. There is a limit on the number of members that can be added to the ELAC, but there are still gaps in representation. Creating a legislative panel to remove legislative members from the ELAC might be an effective way to increase legislative member participation and free up seats on the ELAC. The regional early learning coalitions are interested in participating on the ELAC. The home visiting advocacy community supports the proposed home visiting changes

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Lovick, prime sponsor; Frank Ordway, Department of Early Learning; and Erica Hallock, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.