H-4615.1

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2725**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** House Human Services & Early Learning (originally sponsored by Representatives Ortiz-Self, Morgan, Frame, Kilduff, Lovick, Callan, and Leavitt)

AN ACT Relating to foster resource parents; amending RCW 74.13.250; adding a new section to chapter 74.13 RCW; and providing an expiration date.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 74.13.250 and 2018 c 20 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Preservice training is recognized as a valuable tool to reduce placement disruptions, the length of time children are in care, and foster parent turnover rates. Preservice training also assists potential foster parents in making their final decisions about foster parenting and assists social service agencies in obtaining information about whether to approve potential foster parents.

(2)(a) Foster parent preservice training shall include ((~~information~~)):

(i) Information about the potential impact of placement on foster children; ((~~social~~))

(ii) Social service agency administrative processes and the role of courts in case planning; ((~~the~~))

(iii) The requirements, responsibilities, expectations, and skills needed to be a foster parent; ((~~attachment~~))

(iv) Attachment, separation, and loss issues faced by birth parents, foster children, and foster parents; ((~~child~~))

(v) Child behavior management ((~~and~~)), discipline, and the effects of trauma on child development; ((~~birth~~))

(vi) Birth family relationships; ((~~information on the limits of the adoption support program as provided in RCW 74.13A.020(4); and helping~~))

(vii) Information regarding culturally appropriate services, implicit bias, the Washington state Indian child welfare act under chapter 13.38 RCW, and the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (92 Stat. 3069; 25 U.S.C. ch. 21 Sec. 1901 et seq.) as amended; and

(viii) Helping children leave foster care.

(b) Preservice training shall assist applicants in making informed decisions about whether they want to be foster parents. Preservice training shall be designed to enable the agency to assess the ability, readiness, and appropriateness of families to be foster parents. As a decision tool, effective preservice training provides potential foster parents with enough information to make an appropriate decision, affords potential foster parents an opportunity to discuss their decision with others and consider its implications for their family, clarifies foster family expectations, presents a realistic picture of what foster parenting involves, and allows potential foster parents to consider and explore the different types of children they might serve.

(c) The preservice training must clarify that the focus of foster parenting is on reunification, separate and apart from the adoption process. Potential adoptive parents may receive separate training designed specifically to address their unique needs. The preservice training must reinforce that foster parenting is temporary in nature with the following goals:

(i) Maintaining the safety of the foster child;

(ii) Promoting reunification with the foster child's birth parent or parents; and

(iii) Promoting permanency for the child.

(3) Foster parents shall complete preservice training before the issuance of a foster care license, except that the department may, on a case by case basis, issue a written waiver that allows the foster parent to complete the training after licensure, so long as the training is completed within ninety days following licensure.

(4) All components of the foster parent preservice training shall be made available online, if possible. The department shall allow individuals to complete as much online preservice training as is practicable while requiring that some preservice training be completed in person.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The department shall convene a meeting or meetings with stakeholders to discuss changing the term "foster parent" to "foster resource parent" or using another term.

(a) The department shall use existing processes, including the process for consultation with foster parents required under RCW 74.13.031(17) to conduct the meetings required under subsection (1) of this section.

(b) The stakeholders consulted under subsection (1) of this section shall include birth parents, foster parents, and entities representing the interests of foster parents and birth parents.

(2) By November 1, 2020, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the department shall provide a report to the appropriate committees of the legislature that includes the following:

(a) A description of the meeting or meetings that took place as required under subsection (1) of this section;

(b) A description of the stakeholders who were included in the meeting or meetings that took place as required under subsection (1) of this section;

(c) A discussion of the terminology proposed to replace the term "foster parent"; and

(d) Recommendations regarding continued use of the term "foster parent" or using different terminology.

(3) This section expires June 30, 2021.

**--- END ---**