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## Human Services & Early Learning Committee

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### 2SSB 5493

**Brief Description:** Concerning convening local communities to reduce intergenerational poverty.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation (originally sponsored by Senators Zeiger, Darneille and Walsh).

<p><b>Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Directs the Department of Social and Health Services to ensure the establishment of Local Service Area Advisory and Partnership Boards.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 2/25/20

**Staff:** Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

**Background:**

WorkFirst.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a federal block grant that provides temporary cash assistance, subsidized childcare, and work programs for families. The Washington WorkFirst TANF Act (Act) of 1997 created the WorkFirst program. With limited exceptions, adult TANF recipients must participate in one or more WorkFirst activities such as employment-based training programs, career development, community service, work skills assessment and job search training, and vocational training programs.

WorkFirst Local Planning Areas.

The DSHS has established WorkFirst service areas that were created to plan WorkFirst programs and distribute WorkFirst resources. There are 26 Local Planning Area (LPA) partnerships for the WorkFirst program that coordinate and plan for WorkFirst program implementation and local

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poverty reduction efforts. The LPA partnerships include representation from community nonprofit organizations, tribes, higher education institutions, and state and local government.

Every two years each DSHS region must develop a WorkFirst program plan. The plan must be prepared with local and regional sources. Regional area program implementation may deviate from the statewide program if specified in a service area plan.

Other.

The DSHS operates 54 Community Services Offices (CSOs) that provide public assistance such as TANF, food assistance, and subsidized child care referrals to qualified individuals and households in the community.

In 2018 the Legislative-Executive WorkFirst Poverty Reduction Oversight Task Force was directed to expand its scope beyond monitoring the delivery of the WorkFirst program to include a broader focus on intergenerational poverty and poverty reduction.

**Summary of Bill:**

The DSHS must ensure that local service area advisory and partnership boards (boards) are established and the DSHS must provide staffing assistance to the boards. The boards must meet at least quarterly and:

- promote effective communication and collaboration among the CSOs, local governments, and other service providers;
- advise and comment on program policies;
- work to resolve local issues including client referral and service gaps;
- review local data trends and public assistance client feedback;
- propose innovative and evidence-based collaborative services; and
- provide input for the plans required to be developed for each local service area.

The DSHS CSOs must collaborate with community partners through the boards to develop effective work and work preparation programs.

The "WorkFirst service areas" are renamed "service areas" and are charged with planning programs, distributing resources, and fostering local collaborations with community partners to reduce chronic intergenerational poverty.

The plan required every two years from each region for the WorkFirst program is changed to a plan every two years for local collaboration that must be developed for each local service area.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 11, 2020.

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