
College & Workforce Development Committee

HB 1872

Brief Description: Establishing the care worker center to promote caregiving professions.

Sponsors: Representatives Senn, Slatter, Berry, Leavitt, Santos, Sells, Simmons, Bronoske, Shewmake, Taylor, Chopp, Ramel, Callan, Riccelli, Lekanoff, Bateman, Macri, Harris-Talley, Valdez, Duerr and Pollet.

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishes the Care Worker Center under the authority of the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. |
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Hearing Date: 1/19/22

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

There are various types of care workers who provide individual care to clients or client family members in their homes, daycare centers, institutions, and other settings. Care workers include for example, child care providers, long-term care workers, and personal care attendants. Long-term care workers provide paid, personal care assistance to individuals with developmental disabilities or other long-term care needs. Long-term care workers include individual providers of home care services. There are also paid caregivers in adult family homes and assisted living facilities who care for residents with special needs, such as dementia, developmental disabilities, or mental illness.

The Workforce Training and Education Coordination Board (Workforce Board) staffs a task force, called the Health Workforce Council (Council), that is charged with creating a statewide

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plan to address healthcare workforce shortages. The Council provides updates to policymakers on health workforce supply and demand, tracks progress on implementation of new programs, and brings key stakeholders together to develop and advocate for sustainable solutions.

In its 2018 annual report, the Council recommended that the Workforce Board and the Council convene stakeholders to research career pathways, review available workforce data, and develop a policy framework for a "care worker career lattice" to address the retention and advancement of frontline entry level and mid-level care workers.

Summary of Bill:

The Workforce Board must establish the Care Worker Center to elevate the care worker sector, increase retention and recruitment, and promote the value and different employment options of care workers. The Care Worker Center is an online, central portal of research and resources to be used by care workers, employers, high school counselors, postsecondary education and training providers, and policymakers. Initially, the Care Worker Center must focus on three caregiving professions: child care, long-term care, and personal care attendants for people with disabilities. During the first two years, the Workforce Board must set up the Care Worker Center with staff and an online portal, conduct an introductory marketing campaign, and work with appropriate stakeholders to fulfill the duties of the Care Worker Center, which are as follows:

- establish an online resource center linking care workers to information about free and low-cost services or other resources to support the well-being of care workers and their families;
- identify similarities and differences across care worker occupations and licensing requirements to facilitate worker mobility across care worker professions;
- research and analyze labor force data on the care worker sectors, including education output and expected job vacancies;
- track turnover rates and conduct surveys to better understand the reasons care workers remain and leave the occupation and ideas for increasing retention;
- maintain a searchable repository of research and periodically disseminate findings;
- perform research and analysis on trends within Washington;
- promote greater numbers of employees, better customer outcomes, increased worker retention, the value of working as a care worker, and encourage development of the care worker sector;
- establish online career navigation resources;
- develop policy recommendations specific to maintaining, supporting, and increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the care worker fields;
- map care worker skill sets, competencies, abilities, and experiences to job progression opportunities and identify areas where additional occupational licensing categories or education and training credentials are needed;
- explore opportunities and make recommendations to increase access, flexibility, and affordability of education and training for care workers;
- administer a transformation grant pilot program to promote new care practice methods and ideas to transform the care worker sector and develop metrics and reporting mechanisms to

- track progress and outcomes; and
- develop, collect, and disseminate data, information, results, and best practices regarding care workers for the purpose of providing policy recommendations to facilitate care worker transformation and improve recruitment and retention.

The Workforce Board must report to the Legislature by September 1st of the first year of each biennium, beginning with September 1, 2022, on three things: (1) the progress of meeting the goals of the Care Worker Center; (2) the results of the transformation grant pilot program; and (3) policy and practice recommendations based on the research and data collected.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 11, 2022.

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