
SENATE BILL 6296

State of Washington

56th Legislature

2000 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Jacobsen, Shin, Thibaudeau, Bauer, Fairley, Patterson, B. Sheldon and McAuliffe

Read first time . Referred to Committee on .

1 AN ACT Relating to increasing access to education for recipients of
2 temporary assistance for needy families; amending RCW 74.08A.250;
3 adding new sections to chapter 74.08A RCW; and creating new sections.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that recent studies
6 show a powerful relationship between postsecondary education and an
7 increase in lifetime earned income. Even just two years of college can
8 equate to a quarter of a million dollar increase in lifetime income.
9 A bachelor's degree can boost annual income seventy-three percent,
10 compared to a high school degree. In addition, studies indicate that
11 for individuals attending college, there is a correlation with improved
12 health status, increased civic participation, improved savings rates,
13 less reliance on government assistance, and improved quality of life
14 for their children. Additionally, this correlates to increased tax
15 revenues and reduced crime rates for society. The legislature finds
16 that a relatively small number of those on welfare would qualify for
17 college admission and benefit from completion of their higher education
18 at a community, trade, or technical college, or other institute of
19 higher education.

1 In 1999, the federal government adopted final regulations for
2 temporary assistance for needy families, allowing expanded use of block
3 grant and maintenance of effort funds. There is now no reason under
4 federal guidelines why these funds cannot be used creatively for a
5 variety of special approaches, to help poor families achieve true
6 financial independence.

7 The legislature intends to provide selective access to
8 postsecondary education for a limited number of qualified adult
9 recipients of temporary assistance for needy families, while
10 maintaining the emphasis on employment that is the hallmark of the
11 WorkFirst program. The legislature intends to provide temporary
12 assistance for needy families grants, including child care and tuition
13 assistance, to a limited number of college-qualified individuals, with
14 the goal of providing a means for highly motivated welfare recipients
15 to successfully complete college, exit assistance, and secure careers
16 to benefit themselves, their families, and society.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The department shall establish the ICAN
18 program. The goal of the program is to help college-qualified parents
19 who have dependent children in need and are eligible for temporary
20 assistance for needy families receive up to four years of undergraduate
21 education or training. Annually the department shall provide up to six
22 hundred parents accepted into or enrolled at an institution of higher
23 education in Washington state with a package of student aid that
24 includes their temporary assistance for needy families cash grants, as
25 well as the other support services provided to recipients of temporary
26 assistance for needy families, including but not limited to medical
27 assistance, child care, food stamps, tuition assistance based upon
28 actual tuition or public higher education tuition rates, whichever is
29 less, and other support services.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Unless the context clearly requires
31 otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout sections 2
32 through 11 of this act.

33 (1) "ICAN program" means the independence through college for
34 achievers in need program.

35 (2) "Institution of higher education" means the state research
36 universities, the regional universities, The Evergreen State College,

1 the community colleges, the technical colleges, and private career
2 schools, colleges, and universities.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The ICAN program shall be supported from any
4 of the following sources or combination of sources: (1) Funds other
5 than those granted to the state under Title IV-A of the federal social
6 security act or (2) temporary assistance for needy families block grant
7 funds or (3) temporary assistance for needy families caseload savings,
8 if the state funds used for this program meet the definition of state
9 maintenance of effort under Title IV-A of the federal social security
10 act.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) Families that qualify for temporary
12 assistance for needy families under this chapter may participate in the
13 ICAN program as a work activity of the temporary assistance for needy
14 families program. Eligibility for assistance, and the amount of
15 assistance, shall be determined under criteria used in the temporary
16 assistance for needy families program.

17 (2) The department shall assess the applicant to determine that the
18 education and training sought by the applicant is likely to result in
19 employment that provides the wages and benefits necessary for the
20 applicant to support the applicant's family without public assistance.

21 (3) To the extent that funds are available, enrollment in the
22 program shall be granted if the department determines that:

23 (a) The applicant does not possess the necessary skills to obtain
24 employment that will enable that individual to support a family at
25 seventy-five percent of the median family income in the state for a
26 family of the same size as the applicant's family;

27 (b) Considering potential employment opportunities and local labor
28 market conditions, the undergraduate education sought by the individual
29 is likely to improve the ability of the family to be self-supporting;
30 and

31 (c) The applicant has the aptitude to successfully complete the
32 proposed program at an institution of higher education.

33 The applicant shall meet the requirements for the state need grant
34 under RCW 28B.10.800 through 28B.10.820 and qualify for acceptance at
35 and be admitted to an institution of higher education in the state.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The department shall provide career planning
2 and counseling services to applicants for, and recipients of,
3 assistance under sections 2 through 11 of this act to assist them in
4 choosing an educational plan that is likely to lead to self-
5 sufficiency, and provide to students who have begun an educational
6 program assistance to overcome barriers to completing the program and
7 becoming employed. The department may work with other state, local,
8 and private entities to provide the planning and counseling services.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Students receiving assistance under sections
10 2 through 11 of this act shall meet the following requirements:

11 (1) They must be accepted into a postsecondary program; and

12 (2) They must be enrolled full-time, with the expectation that they
13 make satisfactory progress toward a degree, certificate, or license in
14 a field likely to create a high probability of employment.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** The department shall inform all persons
16 applying for or participating in the temporary assistance for needy
17 families program of the option to apply for the ICAN program and the
18 criteria for acceptance. Recipients of temporary assistance for needy
19 families who have already partially completed their postsecondary
20 education will be encouraged to apply.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** To the extent permitted by federal law,
22 assistance received under sections 2 through 11 of this act must be
23 disregarded as income and excluded as a resource or asset to the same
24 extent as assistance under the temporary assistance for needy families
25 program, under this chapter, for the purposes of any state, federal,
26 tribal, or municipal assistance program. Assistance received under
27 sections 2 through 11 of this act must be treated in the same manner as
28 assistance received under the temporary assistance for needy families
29 program under this chapter for all tax purposes. Furthermore, the
30 department shall implement the program so participants qualify for food
31 stamps until completion of their degree or certificate.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** (1) The department shall contract with a
33 public or private entity for the performance of an outcome study of
34 program participants. The study shall, at a minimum:

35 (a) Track degree or certificate completion by participants;

- 1 (b) Report on wage progression of participants;
- 2 (c) Report on the program's dropout rate, including temporary
3 assistance for needy families' recidivism;
- 4 (d) Quantify the projected increase in lifetime earnings of program
5 graduates; and
- 6 (e) Report on self-identified enhancers and barriers to success in
7 postsecondary education experience by the study population.

8 (2) The results of the outcome study shall be reported annually, no
9 later than January 15th, beginning in 2001, to the governor and to
10 appropriate committees of the legislature.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** Participation in the ICAN program shall be
12 incorporated in the recipient's individual personal responsibility
13 plan, in a manner that clearly indicates that satisfactory progress in
14 college is the recipient's work activity and responsibility.

15 **Sec. 12.** RCW 74.08A.250 and 1997 c 58 s 311 are each amended to
16 read as follows:

17 Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, as used in this
18 chapter, "work activity" means:

- 19 (1) Unsubsidized paid employment in the private or public sector;
- 20 (2) Subsidized paid employment in the private or public sector;
- 21 (3) Work experience, including work associated with the
22 refurbishing of publicly assisted housing, if sufficient paid
23 employment is not available;
- 24 (4) On-the-job training;
- 25 (5) Job search and job readiness assistance;
- 26 (6) Community service programs;
- 27 (7) Vocational educational training, not to exceed twelve months
28 with respect to any individual;
- 29 (8) Job skills training directly related to employment;
- 30 (9) Education directly related to employment, in the case of a
31 recipient who has not received a high school diploma or a GED;
- 32 (10) Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a course of
33 study leading to a GED, in the case of a recipient who has not
34 completed secondary school or received such a certificate;
- 35 (11) The provision of child care services to an individual who is
36 participating in a community service program; ((and))

1 (12) Services required by the recipient under RCW 74.08.025(3) and
2 74.08A.010(3) to become employable; and

3 (13) Participation in the independence through college for
4 achievers in need program.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** The department shall adopt rules to
6 implement sections 2 through 11 of this act.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 14.** Sections 2 through 11 and 13 of this act
8 are each added to chapter 74.08A RCW.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 15.** If any part of this act is found to be in
10 conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to
11 the allocation of federal funds to the state, the conflicting part of
12 this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict and with
13 respect to the agencies directly affected, and this finding does not
14 affect the operation of the remainder of this act in its application to
15 the agencies concerned. Rules adopted under this act must meet federal
16 requirements that are a necessary condition to the receipt of federal
17 funds by the state.

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