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HOUSE BILL 1190

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State of Washington

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By Representatives Pettigrew, Hinkle, Santos, Nixon, Kagi, Roberts, Darneille, Walsh, Haler, Appleton, Chase, Cody, Kenney, Clibborn, Ormsby, McIntire and Hasegawa

Read first time 01/18/2005. Referred to Committee on Children & Family Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to supporting the long-term success of families  
2 with children by removing barriers to Temporary Assistance for Needy  
3 Families and the WorkFirst programs; amending RCW 74.08.025; and  
4 creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

7 (1) Too many families with children in Washington are unable to  
8 afford shelter, clothing, and other necessities of life; basic  
9 necessities that are at the core of economic security and family  
10 stability.

11 (2) Parents who lack resources for shelter, clothing, and  
12 transportation are less likely to obtain employment or have the ability  
13 to adequately provide for their children's physical and emotional well-  
14 being and educational success.

15 (3) Washington's temporary assistance for needy families helps  
16 financially struggling families find jobs, keep their jobs, get better  
17 jobs, and build a better life for their children through the WorkFirst  
18 program.

1 (4) Participation in the WorkFirst program through temporary  
2 assistance for needy families is an important step towards self-  
3 sufficiency and decreased long-term reliance on governmental  
4 assistance.

5 (5) Removing this barrier to participation in temporary assistance  
6 for needy families and WorkFirst will serve to strengthen families and  
7 communities throughout the state.

8 (6) Preventing even one percent of these individuals from  
9 reoffending by extending economic and employment opportunities will  
10 result in law enforcement and correctional savings that substantially  
11 exceed the cost of temporary assistance for needy families and  
12 WorkFirst services.

13 **Sec. 2.** RCW 74.08.025 and 2004 c 54 s 5 are each amended to read  
14 as follows:

15 (1) Public assistance may be awarded to any applicant:

16 (a) Who is in need and otherwise meets the eligibility requirements  
17 of department assistance programs; and

18 (b) Who has not made a voluntary assignment of property or cash for  
19 the purpose of qualifying for an assistance grant; and

20 (c) Who is not an inmate of a public institution except as a  
21 patient in a medical institution or except as an inmate in a public  
22 institution who could qualify for federal aid assistance: PROVIDED,  
23 That the assistance paid by the department to recipients in nursing  
24 homes, or receiving nursing home care, may cover the cost of clothing  
25 and incidentals and general maintenance exclusive of medical care and  
26 health services. The department may pay a grant to cover the cost of  
27 clothing and personal incidentals in public or private medical  
28 institutions and institutions for tuberculosis. The department shall  
29 allow recipients in nursing homes to retain, in addition to the grant  
30 to cover the cost of clothing and incidentals, wages received for work  
31 as a part of a training or rehabilitative program designed to prepare  
32 the recipient for less restrictive placement to the extent permitted  
33 under Title XIX of the federal social security act.

34 (2) Any person otherwise qualified for temporary assistance for  
35 needy families under this title who has resided in the state of  
36 Washington for fewer than twelve consecutive months immediately  
37 preceding application for assistance is limited to the benefit level in

1 the state in which the person resided immediately before Washington,  
2 using the eligibility rules and other definitions established under  
3 this chapter, that was obtainable on the date of application in  
4 Washington state, if the benefit level of the prior state is lower than  
5 the level provided to similarly situated applicants in Washington  
6 state. The benefit level under this subsection shall be in effect for  
7 the first twelve months a recipient is on temporary assistance for  
8 needy families in Washington state.

9 (3) Any person otherwise qualified for temporary assistance for  
10 needy families who is assessed through the state alcohol and substance  
11 abuse program as drug or alcohol-dependent and requiring treatment to  
12 become employable shall be required by the department to participate in  
13 a drug or alcohol treatment program as a condition of benefit receipt.

14 ~~(4) ((In order to be eligible for temporary assistance for needy~~  
15 ~~families benefits, any applicant with a felony conviction after August~~  
16 ~~21, 1996, involving drug use or possession, must: (a) Have been~~  
17 ~~assessed as chemically dependent by a chemical dependency program~~  
18 ~~approved under chapter 70.96A RCW and be participating in or have~~  
19 ~~completed a coordinated rehabilitation plan consisting of chemical~~  
20 ~~dependency treatment and vocational services; and (b) have not been~~  
21 ~~convicted of a felony involving drug use or possession in the three~~  
22 ~~years prior to the most current conviction.~~

23 ~~(5))~~ Pursuant to 21 U.S.C. 862a(d)(1), the department shall exempt  
24 individuals from the eligibility restrictions of 21 U.S.C. 862a(a)(1)  
25 and (2) to ensure eligibility for temporary assistance for needy  
26 families benefits and federal food assistance.

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