
SENATE BILL 5684

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Brown, Kline, Hargrove, McAuliffe, Stevens, Keiser, Thibaudeau, Fairley, Weinstein, Spanel and Rasmussen

Read first time 02/02/2005. Referred to Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to child care workers; adding new sections to
2 chapter 74.13 RCW; and making appropriations.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
5 to read as follows:

6 The legislature finds that as of 2000, child care workers in the
7 state earned an average hourly wage of eight dollars and twenty-two
8 cents, only fifty-eight percent received medical insurance through
9 employers, only sixty-six percent received paid sick leave, and only
10 seventy-three percent received paid vacation. The legislature further
11 finds that low wages for child care workers create a barrier for
12 individuals entering the profession, result in child care workers
13 leaving the profession in order to earn a living wage in another
14 profession, and make it difficult for child care workers to afford
15 professional education and training. As a result, the availability of
16 quality child care in the state suffers.

17 The legislature intends to increase wages to child care workers
18 through establishing a child care career and wage ladder that provides
19 increased wages for child care workers based on their work experience,

1 level of responsibility, and education. To the extent practicable
2 within available funds, this child care career and wage ladder shall
3 mirror the successful child care career and wage ladder pilot project
4 operated by the state between 2000 and 2003. While it is the intent of
5 the legislature to establish the vision of a statewide child care
6 career and wage ladder that will enhance employment quality and
7 stability for child care workers, the legislature also recognizes that
8 funding allocations will determine the extent of statewide
9 implementation of a child care career and wage ladder.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
11 to read as follows:

12 (1) The division of child care and early learning in the department
13 of social and health services shall establish a child care career and
14 wage ladder in licensed child care centers that meet the following
15 criteria: (a) At least ten percent of child care slots are dedicated
16 to children whose care is subsidized by the state or any political
17 subdivision thereof or any local government; (b) the center agrees to
18 adopt the child care career and wage ladder, which, at a minimum, shall
19 be at the same pay schedule as existed in the previous child care
20 career and wage ladder pilot project; and (c) the center meets further
21 program standards as established by rule pursuant to section 4 of this
22 act.

23 The child care career and wage ladder shall include wage increments
24 for levels of education, years of relevant experience, levels of work
25 responsibility, relevant early childhood education credits, and
26 relevant requirements in the state training and registry system.

27 (2) The division shall establish procedures for the allocation of
28 funds to implement the child care career and wage ladder among child
29 care centers meeting the criteria identified in subsection (1) of this
30 section. In developing these procedures, the division shall:

31 (a) Review past efforts or administration of the child care career
32 and wage ladder pilot project in order to take advantage of any
33 findings, recommendations, or administrative practices that contributed
34 to that pilot project's success;

35 (b) Consult with stakeholders, including organizations representing
36 child care teachers and providers, in developing an allocation formula

1 that incorporates consideration of geographic and demographic
2 distribution of child care centers adopting the child care career and
3 wage ladder; and

4 (c) Develop a system for prioritizing child care centers interested
5 in adopting the child care career and wage ladder that is based on the
6 criteria identified in subsection (1) of this section.

7 (3) Notwithstanding the requirements of subsection (2) of this
8 section, child care centers meeting the criteria in subsection (1) of
9 this section located in urban areas of the department of social and
10 health services region one shall receive a minimum of fifteen percent
11 of the funds allocated through the child care career and wage ladder,
12 and of these centers, child care centers meeting the criteria in
13 subsection (1) of this section participating in the department of
14 social and health services child care center accreditation project
15 shall have first priority for child care career and wage ladder
16 funding.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
18 to read as follows:

19 Child care centers adopting the child care career and wage ladder
20 established pursuant to section 2 of this act shall increase wages for
21 child care workers who have earned a high school diploma or GED
22 certificate, gain additional years of experience, or accept increasing
23 levels of responsibility in providing child care, in accordance with
24 the child care career and wage ladder. The department of social and
25 health services shall pay wage increments for child care workers
26 employed by child care centers adopting the child care career and wage
27 ladder established pursuant to section 2 of this act who earn early
28 childhood education credits or meet relevant requirements in the state
29 training and registry system, in accordance with the child care career
30 and wage ladder.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
32 to read as follows:

33 The division of child care and early learning in the department of
34 social and health services shall establish further program standards by
35 rule. The division of child care and early learning shall also study
36 the impact of the child care career and wage ladder on the quality of

1 child care and the child care work force, and report its findings to
2 the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by
3 December 1, 2006.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The sum of five million dollars, or as
5 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated from the general fund
6 to the department of social and health services for the fiscal year
7 ending June 30, 2006, to carry out the purposes of this act.

8 (2) The sum of five million dollars, or as much thereof as may be
9 necessary, is appropriated from the general fund to the department of
10 social and health services for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007, to
11 carry out the purposes of this act.

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