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**Human Services Committee**

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**HB 1548**

**Brief Description:** Creating the individual and family services program for people with developmental disabilities.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Pettigrew, Miloscia, Jarrett, O'Brien, Haler, Priest, Ormsby, Roberts, Eddy, Darneille, Appleton, Walsh, Sells, Barlow, Kenney, Conway, Kristiansen, Ericks, P. Sullivan, Goodman, Linville, Wood, Pearson, Moeller, Springer, Lovick, Lantz, Morrell and Santos.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Creates the Individual and Family Services Program for individuals with developmental disabilities.

**Hearing Date:** 1/31/07

**Staff:** Sonja Hallum (786-7092).

**Background:**

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) provides support and services for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Approximately 35,700 people are currently enrolled with the DDD. Within the DDD, the Family Support (FS) Program provides assistance to families who have a family member with a developmental disability living at home. The FS Program currently administers multiple, separate programs to families receiving support. The multiple programs provide different levels of support for people with similar needs. The following are the current family support programs offered through the DDD, all of which are state-funded programs:

Traditional Family Support (TFS): The original program offering family support services. This program was designed to reduce or eliminate the need for out-of-home residential placements of individuals with developmental disabilities when it is in the best interest of the person to continue living with his or her family.

Family Support Opportunity (FSO): FSO began in June 1996 in an effort to provide more resources to a greater number of families than TFS. It provides a standard amount of money to

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families that can be spent on a variety of services. Additional support may be available to families if they require extraordinary support by applying to the Serious Need Program.

Emergency Services: Emergency Services funding is designed to respond to a single incident, situation, or short-term crisis such as caregiver hospitalization, absence, or incapacity. Funds are provided for a limited period not to exceed 2 months.

Flexible Family Support Pilot Program: The pilot program was created by budget proviso for fiscal years 2006 and 2007. The intent of the pilot is to provide resources to families not being served by other DDD-funded sources.

Community Service Grants: The FS Program offers short or long-term grants for communities or organizations to provide support and services for families. The resources are earmarked to sustain information and education activities such as sending out informational materials, fostering community programs to reach out to people with disabilities, lending equipment, and connecting families to other families who have children with similar disabilities.

Services provided through these FS Programs can include respite care, training and support, specialized equipment, behavior management, some nursing services, parent/family counseling, specialized utility costs, and other services depending on the program.

In 2005, a budget proviso required the Department of Social and Health Services (Department) to provide recommendations to the Legislature on strategies for integrating state-funded family support programs into a single program.

The Department convened the Family Support Workgroup, which included a stakeholder group, to provide input into the restructuring of the FS Program. In November 2006, the Department issued the State-Funded Family Support Programs Report which contained numerous recommendations. Among the recommendations was the recommendation to consolidate the TFS, FSO, and the pilot program into one Family Support Program. The report also contained the recommendation that income continue to be used as an eligibility criteria and to base award determination upon need as determined by an assessment.

The stakeholders involved in the Family Support Workgroup submitted an addendum to the Department report that included issue areas in which the stakeholders and the Department did not agree. An area of disagreement included whether to include income as an eligibility criteria for services. The stakeholder report recommended that the family support services be based on a family's documented need, as determined by the assessment tool, without regard to income.

### **Summary of Bill:**

The bill is to be known as the Lance Morehouse, Jr. Individual and Family Services Act and it creates the Individual and Family Services Program. The program replaces Family Support Opportunities, Traditional Family Support, and the Flexible Family Support Pilot Program. The Department is required to adopt rules for the program including the following:

Eligibility: Eligibility to receive services is to be determined based solely on an assessment of individual need.

Service Priority: Service priority levels are to be established. The higher the level of need, the greater the amount of services allowed for each individual. The lowest level of need allows

services up to \$2000 per year and the highest level of need allows up to \$6000 of services per year.

Adjustments to Service Caps: The dollar caps at each service priority level must be adjusted every two years by the cost-of-living index.

Allowable Services: Services available under the program include:

- respite care;
- child care;
- therapies;
- architectural and vehicular modifications;
- equipment and supplies;
- specialized nutrition and clothing;
- excess medical costs not covered by another source;
- copays for medical and therapeutic services;
- transportation;
- training;
- counseling;
- behavior management;
- parent/sibling education;
- recreational opportunities; and
- community services grants.

Funding for one-time exceptional needs and emergencies is also available for individuals and families not receiving the annual grants.

If a person has more complex needs, the family is experiencing a prolonged crisis, or a person needs additional services, the Department should make every effort to move the person into a program that provides a federal match.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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