

**HB 1602 - DIGEST**

Finds that foster parents play a critical role in our child welfare system by providing a safe and nurturing environment for children who have been placed in foster care. The legislature further finds that foster parents often forgo employment in order to become foster parents, and thereby lose an opportunity to obtain health care coverage through employer-sponsored health insurance.

Declares an intent to acknowledge the difficulties that foster parents encounter in finding affordable health care coverage by providing opportunities to enroll in the Washington basic health plan.

Appropriates the sum of three million five hundred thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, for the biennium ending June 30, 2009, from the health services account to the health care authority for the purposes of funding subsidized enrollment for up to one thousand foster parents in the basic health plan.