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**SENATE BILL 6279**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2016 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Hill and Darneille; by request of Office of Financial Management

AN ACT Relating to the caseload forecast council; amending RCW 43.88C.010, 43.88C.020, and 43.88C.050; and creating a new section.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 43.88C.010 and 2015 c 128 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The caseload forecast council is hereby created. The council shall consist of two individuals appointed by the governor and four individuals, one of whom is appointed by the chairperson of each of the two largest political caucuses in the senate and house of representatives. The chair of the council shall be selected from among the four caucus appointees. The council may select such other officers as the members deem necessary.

(2) The council shall employ a caseload forecast supervisor to supervise the preparation of all caseload forecasts. As used in this chapter, "supervisor" means the caseload forecast supervisor.

(3) Approval by an affirmative vote of at least five members of the council is required for any decisions regarding employment of the supervisor. Employment of the supervisor shall terminate after each term of three years. At the end of the first year of each three-year term the council shall consider extension of the supervisor's term by one year. The council may fix the compensation of the supervisor. The supervisor shall employ staff sufficient to accomplish the purposes of this section.

(4) The caseload forecast council shall oversee the preparation of and approve, by an affirmative vote of at least four members, the official state caseload forecasts prepared under RCW 43.88C.020. If the council is unable to approve a forecast before a date required in RCW 43.88C.020, the supervisor shall submit the forecast without approval and the forecast shall have the same effect as if approved by the council.

(5) A councilmember who does not cast an affirmative vote for approval of the official caseload forecast may request, and the supervisor shall provide, an alternative forecast based on assumptions specified by the member.

(6) Members of the caseload forecast council shall serve without additional compensation but shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120 while attending sessions of the council or on official business authorized by the council. Nonlegislative members of the council shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

(7) "Caseload," as used in this chapter, means:

(a) The number of persons expected to meet entitlement requirements and require the services of public assistance programs, state correctional institutions, state correctional noninstitutional supervision, state institutions for juvenile offenders, the common school system, long-term care, medical assistance, foster care, and adoption support;

(b) The number of students who are eligible for the Washington college bound scholarship program and are expected to attend an institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.92.030;

(c) The number of children who are eligible, as defined in RCW 43.215.405, to participate in, and the number of children actually served by, the early childhood education and assistance program.

(8) The caseload forecast council shall forecast the temporary assistance for needy families and the working connections child care programs as a courtesy.

(9) The caseload forecast council shall forecast youth participating in the extended foster care program pursuant to RCW 74.13.031 separately from other children who are residing in foster care and who are under eighteen years of age.

(10) The caseload forecast council shall forecast the number of nonmedicaid persons expected to enroll in qualified health or dental plans offered by the health benefit exchange established in RCW 43.71.020.

(11) The caseload forecast council shall forecast early achiever quality award and tiered reimbursement, levels 2 through 5, for the working connections child care, seasonal child care, and homeless child care programs.

(12) Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions provided in RCW 43.88.020 apply to this chapter.

**Sec.**  RCW 43.88C.020 and 1997 c 168 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) In consultation with the caseload forecast work group established under RCW 43.88C.030, and subject to the approval of the caseload forecast council under RCW 43.88C.010, the supervisor shall prepare:

(a) An official state caseload forecast; and

(b) Other caseload forecasts based on alternative assumptions as the council may determine.

(2) The supervisor shall submit caseload forecasts prepared under this section, along with any unofficial forecasts provided under RCW 43.88C.010, to the governor and the members of the legislative fiscal committees, including one copy to the staff of each of the committees. The forecasts shall be submitted at least three times each year and on such dates as the council determines will facilitate the development of budget proposals by the governor and the legislature.

(3) All agencies of state government and the health benefit exchange established in RCW 43.71.020 shall provide to the supervisor immediate access to all information relating to caseload forecasts.

(4) The administrator of the legislative evaluation and accountability program committee may request, and the supervisor shall provide, alternative caseload forecasts based on assumptions specified by the administrator.

(5) The official state caseload forecast under this section shall be the basis of the governor's budget document as provided in RCW 43.88.030 and utilized by the legislature in the development of the omnibus biennial appropriations act.

**Sec.**  RCW 43.88C.050 and 2015 c 128 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

The caseload forecast council shall appoint a research staff of sufficient size and with sufficient resources to accomplish its duties. The caseload forecast council may request from the administrative office of the courts, the department of early learning, the department of corrections, the health care authority, the superintendent of public instruction, the Washington student achievement council, the department of social and health services, ((~~and~~)) other agencies, and the health benefit exchange established in RCW 43.71.020, with caseloads forecasted by the council, such data, information, and data processing assistance as it may need to accomplish its duties, and such services shall be provided without cost to the caseload forecast council.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The first forecast of the number of nonmedicaid persons expected to enroll in qualified health or dental plans offered by the health benefit exchange, as required by RCW 43.88C.010(10), shall be prepared by the caseload forecast council in time to facilitate the development of budget proposals by the governor for the 2017 legislative session.

(2) The first forecast of early achiever quality award and tiered reimbursement, levels 2 through 5, for the working connections child care, seasonal child care, and homeless child care programs, as required by RCW 43.88C.010(11), shall be prepared by the caseload forecast council in time to facilitate the development of budget proposals by the governor for the 2017 legislative session.

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