S-3601.2

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**SENATE BILL 6464**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2018 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Zeiger, O'Ban, Saldaña, Dhingra, Palumbo, Hasegawa, and Miloscia

AN ACT Relating to studying the cliff effect in the working connections child care program; creating a new section; and providing an effective date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that providing assistance with child care payments can lead to healthier families and greater success for the parent and child. The legislature also finds that, when enrolled in working connections child care, a parent may forsake or be unable to seek advancement or promotion at their job because exceeding designated income thresholds results in a reduced subsidy. The legislature recognizes the importance of advancement and growth within a profession and seeks to avoid situations where a parent receiving child care subsidies cannot afford to accept or seek career advancement and development.

(2) Accordingly, the department of children, youth, and families shall contract with the Washington state institute for public policy to complete an analysis regarding how to address and mitigate the "cliff effect" in the working connections child care program and child care subsidy program. By December 1, 2018, the Washington state institute for public policy shall analyze the working connections copay calculation table and working connections child care program and issue a report on the following:

(a) How to further develop and implement a sliding scale or tiered reimbursement and phase-out model that works for both consumers and providers and provides incentives for quality child care across communities;

(b) Whether or not increasing or decreasing the eligibility threshold for working connections child care would allow parents to grow professionally without losing affordable child care;

(c) Whether further graduation of the copay scale would help alleviate the cliff that occurs at subsidy cut off;

(d) Whether or not adding mental health, substance use, and other client-centered exemptions to the temporary assistance for needy families lifetime sixty month cap would help mitigate the cliff effect; and

(e) Needed administrative improvements and structural changes to the payment system.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act takes effect July 1, 2018.

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