H-4319.2

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**HOUSE BILL 2905**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives J. Johnson, Riccelli, Caldier, Doglio, Pollet, and Ryu

AN ACT Relating to increasing outreach and engagement with access to baby and child dentistry programs; adding a new section to chapter 74.09 RCW; creating a new section; and making an appropriation.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature recognizes that oral disease is the most common childhood chronic disease, yet is almost entirely preventable, impacting school readiness, future employability, and overall well-being and quality of life. The access to baby and child dentistry program has made Washington a leader in oral health care access across the nation, providing greater levels of access and utilization for medicaid eligible children under six years old. The legislature further recognizes that the access to baby and child dentistry program connects children to a dental home in their communities, enabling children to get off to a healthy start. While the state has made great strides, children of color continue to experience higher rates of tooth decay than their peers and children under the age of two are not accessing care at the same rate as older children. Therefore, it is the legislature's intent to expand on the program investments the state has already made to provide additional outreach and support to eligible families and providers, increase very young children's access to care, and further reduce racial and ethnic disparities in access to care and oral health outcomes.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 74.09 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The authority shall work with the statewide managing partner of the access to baby and child dentistry program through a no-cost contract to develop a local access to baby and child dentistry program fund allocation formula, key deliverables, and target metrics for increased outreach and provider engagement and support.

(2) The goals of the work performed under subsection (1) of this section are to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in access to care and oral health outcomes and to increase the percentage of medicaid-enrolled children under the age of two accessing dental care.

(3) The authority shall collaborate with stakeholders to monitor progress toward the goals articulated in subsection (2) of this section and provide support to local access to baby and child dentistry programs and providers.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The sum of two hundred thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal biennium ending June 30, 2021, from the general fund to the health care authority for the purposes of this act.

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