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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5943**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Human Services (originally sponsored by Senators Gildon, Boehnke, Hasegawa, and C. Wilson)

AN ACT Relating to conducting a feasibility study regarding a resource data tool to connect Washington residents to services and resources; adding new sections to chapter 43.20A RCW; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that Washington residents could benefit from having a quick and seamless digital way to connect to services and that state agencies should explore opportunities to provide such services in a way that builds off of the work of their peers by maximizing the state's investments and reducing the duplication of staff efforts in the provision of services. The legislature finds that the advisory group created in this act will have the expertise and experience to bring together ideas for developing a resource data tool, which includes a mobile application and web portal, that may assist Washington residents in gaining access to a variety of existing services, such as social, behavioral health, and housing services. While many providers, both public and private, currently offer these types of services in Washington, the residents of our state do not always have an easy way to learn more about, and use, those services. It is the intent of the legislature to conduct a feasibility study for developing a resource data tool that will easily connect Washingtonians to the services they may need and that will ensure the services are provided in an efficient, cost-effective manner.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall conduct a feasibility study regarding a resource data tool for the purpose of digitally connecting members of the public to state services. The feasibility study must be conducted in collaboration with the advisory group created in section 3 of this act.

(2) The feasibility study shall include recommendations for a mobile application for the purpose of assisting users in accessing state and private resources and services.

(3) Among other relevant topics, the feasibility study shall examine what other digital public resources exist to prevent potential redundancy of programs and to promote administrative efficiency. The feasibility study shall also consider language access, alternative communications options, and equitable access for individuals living with disabilities or limited access to internet services.

(4) The feasibility study shall be submitted, in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, to the governor and appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2024.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall convene an advisory group for providing feedback and consultative advice regarding the feasibility study established by this act. The advisory group shall be composed of experts, interested parties, individuals with lived experience receiving public benefits, organizations who work in the space of system referral and resource navigation, and other relevant stakeholders. The purpose of the advisory group created in this section is to inform the feasibility study, which shall include a plan and framework for launching the resource data tool, a web portal, and a mobile application. The advisory group created in this section is dissolved upon the expiration of this section.

(2) This section expires December 1, 2024.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 through 3 of this act are each added to chapter 43.20A RCW.

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