

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5423

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 1, 2023

**Title:** An act relating to eligibility for working connections child care benefits for persons participating in registered apprenticeships.

**Brief Description:** Providing eligibility for working connections child care benefits.

**Sponsors:** Senators Nobles, Frame, Hasegawa, Hunt, Keiser, Kuderer, Liias, Lovelett, Pedersen, Randall, Robinson, Saldaña, Shewmake, Stanford, Valdez, Wellman and Wilson, C..

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/25/23, 2/01/23 [DPS-WM, DNP].

**Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill**

- Expands Working Connections Child Care eligibility to include the first 12 months of an applicant or consumer's enrollment in a state registered apprenticeship program when their household income does not exceed 85 percent of the state median income at the time of application.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5423 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hunt, Mullet and Pedersen.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Hawkins, Ranking Member; Dozier and McCune.

**Staff:** Ailey Kato (786-7434)

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Background:** Working Connections Child Care. The Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program is a federally and state-funded program that provides child care subsidies to families, and is administered by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). Families may be eligible for child care subsidies if they have a household income at or below 60 percent of the state median income (SMI), and have one or more children younger than 13 or younger than 19 with a verified special need or are under court supervision. As of October 1, 2022, 60 percent of the state median income is \$4,274 maximum monthly income for a family of three.

The state pays part of the cost of child care when a parent is employed, self-employed, or in approved work or education activities and meets other eligibility requirements. The family is responsible for making a copayment to the child care provider based on the family's countable income, which are established in state law.

In 2021, WCCC eligibility was expanded by phasing in higher income thresholds and lower copayments.

Authorizations for WCCC subsidies are effective for 12 months.

Registered Apprenticeships. An apprenticeship combines on-the-job training with related classroom instruction under the supervision of a journey-level professional. After completing a registered apprenticeship program, apprentices receive a professional credential that is recognized nationwide.

**Summary of Bill (First Substitute):** An applicant or consumer is eligible to receive WCCC benefits for the care of one or more eligible children for the first 12 months of the applicant or consumer's enrollment in a state registered apprenticeship program regardless of other eligibility requirements when the applicant or consumer has a household income that does not exceed 85 percent of SMI.

DCYF must adopt a copayment model for household incomes above 60 percent, and at, or below 85 percent of SMI, which must align with any copayment identified or adopted in current law.

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (First Substitute):**

- Removes the requirement that an applicant or consumer was eligible for or was receiving WCCC benefits for a period of 12 months immediately preceding enrollment in a state registered apprenticeship program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill:** *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: Apprenticeship programs allow people to earn while they learn. It can be difficult to afford child care while people are in these programs. Apprenticeships can help diversify the workforce, and access to affordable, safe, and reliable child care is one way to help. Child care is needed to build a robust workforce.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator T'wina Nobles, Prime Sponsor; Erin Frasier, Washington State Building & Construction Trades Council; Maya Gillett, BlueGreen Alliance of WA; Heather Kurtenbach, Ironworkers Local 86; Tara Davis, Ironworkers Local 86; Michael Swanson.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.