

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2528

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Human Services*

Title: An act relating to before-and-after-school child care.

Brief Description: Supporting the establishment of before-and-after-school child care programs.

Sponsor(s): Representatives H. Myers, Winsley, Riley, Leonard, R. King, Hargrove, Beck, Anderson, H. Sommers, Heavey, Miller, Wineberry, Jones, Paris, Franklin, Orr, Wang, Scott, J. Kohl, Roland, Bray, Ogden, Cooper, Pruitt, O'Brien, Hine, Rasmussen and Brekke.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Human Services, February 3, 1992, DPS.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
HUMAN SERVICES**

Majority Report: *The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.* Signed by 10 members: Representatives Leonard, Chair; Riley, Vice Chair; Winsley, Ranking Minority Member; Tate, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson; Beck; Hargrove; Hochstatter; R. King; and H. Myers.

Staff: Bonnie Austin (786-7107).

Background: Many school age children are left unsupervised before and after school while their parents are working or involved in employment-related activities. These children are referred to as "latchkey" children. One reason that these children are left alone is that there are not enough affordable, high quality child care centers for them.

Resources for these children are limited. The Camp Fire Program in south King County operates "Phone Friend," a phone line available from 2:30 to 6:00 pm for latchkey children, and also offers training classes on staying at home alone. However, this is not enough for less mature children who may be at risk. It is estimated that there are 56,000 latchkey children in King County alone, between the ages of eight and 13.

In response to this and other child care needs, Congress in 1991 enacted the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program which provided \$750 million to the states. New funds to Washington under the block grant and other federal child care programs total \$31 million. While most of the block grant money is targeted to child care for low income families, approximately 19 percent of the block grant must be used for before and after school or early childhood development programs.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The promotion of before and after school child care programs located in or near public school buildings is established as state policy. Mini-centers are deleted from current policy.

A before and after school child care facility grant program is established. Grants may be used to expand existing programs or to establish new programs in or near public elementary schools. Public school districts, educational service districts, governmental, and nonprofit organizations may apply for these grants. A local match of 25 percent is required when establishing a new program.

Grants may be used for planning and design of facilities and programs, equipment, supplies, materials, and operating expenses for the first six months of a new program. The Child Care Coordinating Committee will establish grant standards and report to the Legislature on grants awarded.

DSHS is appropriated \$264,000 from the federal Child Care Block Grant for before and after school child care programs.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Educational service districts are added to the list of grantees. The Child Care Coordinating Committee is given a role in setting standards for grant awards and is required to report back to the Legislature. The capital appropriation is deleted. Other clarifying and technical changes are made.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 24, 1992.

Appropriation: Removed.

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

Testimony For: This is the top priority of Child Care Works for Washington. These federal dollars are needed for before and after school programs to serve the urgent needs of latchkey children. Children as young as first grade are on their own after school and need programs to ensure their safety as well as their development.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Lonnie Johns-Brown, Child Care Works for Washington; Sharon Foster, citizen; and Margaret Casey, The Children's Alliance.