

SENATE BILL REPORT

2E2SSB 5780

AS PASSED SENATE, JANUARY 24, 1992

Brief Description: Enhancing employment transition programs for developmentally disabled high school students.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators L. Smith, Wojahn, Niemi, Johnson, West, Thorsness, von Reichbauer, L. Kreidler and Craswell).

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5780 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators West, Chairman; L. Smith, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Johnson, L. Kreidler, Niemi, and Wojahn.

Staff: Sarena Seifer (786-7417)

Hearing Dates: March 5, 1991; March 6, 1991

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5780 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McDonald, Chairman; Craswell, Vice Chairman; Bailey, Bauer, Bluechel, Cantu, Gaspard, Hayner, Johnson, L. Kreidler, Matson, Metcalf, Murray, Newhouse, Niemi, Rinehart, Saling, L. Smith, Talmadge, West, Williams, and Wojahn.

Staff: Judy Fitzgerald (786-7715)

Hearing Dates: March 8, 1991; March 11, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Approximately 1800 developmentally disabled citizens are currently in need of some type of employment service. In addition, the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council estimates that 250 to 300 developmentally disabled individuals graduate from high school each year needing employment services to obtain and keep a job. Some of these individuals may not request needed services. If employment services are requested, these persons are usually placed on a waiting list.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction offer specialized programs facilitating the transition from school to work for special education students in some school districts throughout the state. Several school districts have developed innovative

programs which place these young adults in community employment settings.

Developmental Disabilities Planning Council staff reports that high school graduates who do not utilize the skills gained in the classroom tend to lose those skills over time. According to the October 1988 Washington State Interagency Transition Report, the failure to actively utilize these skills results in the loss of a \$101,000 public investment in special education per student.

SUMMARY:

The Legislature intends to expand services to developmentally disabled secondary school graduates within available resources.

The Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) must establish a regional disabilities employment function to promote and enhance effective transition from educational or treatment programs to employment for persons with developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injuries and mental illness. Other duties of the function must include the enhanced use of alternative resources and the promotion of competitive, integrated employment opportunities.

Regional disabilities employment contractors must develop a package of incentives which enhance the disabled student's transition from school to work. These packages are offered by application to interested local school districts. In addition, contractors must collaborate with a variety of local entities to develop and encourage community partnerships which create employment opportunities for functionally disabled persons in transition from school or treatment programs to work.

The Secretary of DSHS must appoint regional disabilities employment advisory councils. These councils must use a competitive process to develop a list of potential regional disabilities employment contractors. The characteristics of potential contractors are enumerated. The secretary must select regional disabilities employment function contractors from lists developed by the regional advisory councils.

In addition, advisory councils must plan for the community options and services available through regional disabilities employment contractors. The advisory council must have no more than 20 members and provides representatives from the disabled community or their parents, secondary and postsecondary educational institutions and other public and private organizations.

A developmentally disabled student's individual education plan must include transition services by the age of 16. The transition plan must be developed in conjunction with a regional coordinator of transition services, if one exists. If educationally appropriate, community based transitional

services and the choices of parents, guardians and the student must be provided by the school district.

If these services are available and educationally appropriate, a special education cooperative, school district or group of districts must contract for transition services through a regional transition services coordinator.

Recent federal definitions of transition services are adopted. The Superintendent of Public Instruction must adopt rules to implement the transition services for developmentally disabled students outlined in the act.

A null and void clause is included making the act contingent upon funding in the budget.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR (Health & Long-Term Care):

The bill provides an effective first step toward addressing the needs of young adults with special needs. The bill provides needed opportunities for young adults with developmental disabilities leaving the school system. The bill supports the recommendations of both the 1988 Washington State Interagency Transition Plan and the Developmental Disabilities 1990 Report.

TESTIMONY AGAINST (Health & Long-Term Care):

The use of the term "functional definition" may result in some confusion for the involved agencies. The Department of Social and Health Services cannot support the bill because it is not included in the Governor's proposed 1991-93 biennium budget.

TESTIFIED (Health & Long-Term Care): Sharon Hansen, Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (pro); Jeanne Munro, Department of Social and Health Services

TESTIMONY FOR (Ways & Means):

Currently many of the state's DD children who receive services through the schools have no employment or programs after they leave school. The skills they have learned tend to diminish over time with no day programs. This will would allow the transition from the school setting to employment or day treatment.

TESTIMONY AGAINST (Ways & Means): None

TESTIFIED (Ways & Means): Ken Kanikeberg, OSPI; Jeff Larsen (pro); Michael Doctor (pro); Sharon Hansen (pro)