
SENATE BILL 5653

State of Washington

52nd Legislature

1991 Regular Session

By Senators Roach, Bailey, Stratton, Murray, Talmadge, Vognild, McMullen, Gaspard, Snyder, Wojahn, Johnson, Jesernig, Thorsness and Pelz.

Read first time February 13, 1991. Referred to Committee on Children & Family Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to child care services for homeless families
2 including families that are homeless due to domestic violence; adding
3 a new section to chapter 74.15 RCW; creating a new section; making an
4 appropriation; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that specialized
7 child care services are needed to meet the needs of homeless children
8 younger than school age to improve their physical, social, medical, and
9 emotional state. These services will prevent later educational and
10 social failures and resulting societal costs. Continuity in child care
11 arrangements is vital for children who are experiencing constant
12 disruption in their living arrangements.

13 The legislature further finds that homeless parents, in order to
14 achieve independence, need an appropriate place to provide care for
15 their children while they seek or maintain employment, attend

1 treatment, seek permanent housing, or obtain respite from the stress in
2 their lives.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.15 RCW
4 to read as follows:

5 (1) For the purposes of this section:

6 (a) "Homeless" means persons, including families, who, due to
7 domestic violence or other causes, on one particular day or night, do
8 not have a decent and safe shelter or sufficient funds to purchase a
9 place to stay or whose primary nighttime residence is an emergency
10 shelter or transitional housing program for homeless persons or victims
11 of domestic violence.

12 (b) "Domestic violence" has the same definition as in RCW
13 10.99.020.

14 (c) "Specialized child care" means all-day care that is
15 developmentally appropriate child care for homeless children provided
16 by specialized child care centers or by purchase of existing slots in
17 community child care centers or family day care homes. Such care may
18 include low staff-to-child ratios, counseling, parent support services,
19 health care, transportation, specially trained staff, and appropriate
20 curricula.

21 (d) "Respite child care" means drop-in, custodial child care for
22 children where specialized child care is not practical, such as in
23 communities with small shelter populations or for families housed in
24 hotels or motels under "voucher" programs as provided in chapter 74.50
25 RCW.

26 (2) The department shall, within the funds appropriated for this
27 purpose, contract with eligible providers for specialized child care
28 and respite care for children of homeless parents. The total
29 allocation to providers within a county shall be:

1 (a) No less than twenty-five thousand dollars per fiscal year in
2 any county that had at least one hundred children under the age of five
3 served in emergency shelters the preceding year as reported by the
4 department of community development; or

5 (b) No more than ten thousand dollars per fiscal year in any county
6 that had less than one hundred children under the age of five served in
7 emergency shelters the preceding year as reported by the department of
8 community development.

9 Providers shall demonstrate that licensed child care facilities are
10 available to provide specialized child care for children under the age
11 of six. Respite child care providers shall demonstrate that respite
12 child care is available for children under the age of six. Child care
13 services provided by shelters are subject to department of community
14 development rules on applicant eligibility criteria.

15 (3) Providers of respite child care are required to submit to a
16 felony background check through the state patrol.

17 (4) Local funds used for child care services for the homeless that
18 are replaced by funds provided under this section shall continue to be
19 used for services for homeless children.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The sum of two million six hundred
21 thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is
22 appropriated from the general fund to the department of social and
23 health services for the biennium ending June 30, 1993, to carry out the
24 purposes of this act.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act is necessary for the immediate
26 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
27 state government and its existing public institutions, and this act
28 shall take effect July 1, 1991.