
SENATE BILL 5921

State of Washington 52nd Legislature 1991 Regular Session

By Senators Thorsness, A. Smith and L. Kreidler.

Read first time March 5, 1991. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to health and nutrition; adding new sections to
2 chapter 74.04 RCW; adding new sections to Title 28A RCW; adding a new
3 section to chapter 43.63A RCW; creating new sections; making
4 appropriations; providing an effective date; and declaring an
5 emergency.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that adequate
8 nutrition is one of the strongest prerequisites for individual and
9 community health. Women with young children who do not maintain
10 adequate diets are more frequently ill, participate less fully in
11 educational opportunities, experience more preventable health problems
12 and cannot provide for themselves as well as those who maintain
13 adequate diets.

14 Savings in health care costs, costs of increased disability, and
15 potential loss of human life make increasing the availability of

1 nutritious food to pregnant women and their newborns a wise investment
2 for the state to make.

3 Children who are hungry, undernourished, or malnourished are unable
4 to learn as easily as other children and often do not achieve to their
5 highest ability. These children also experience more frequent illness
6 and chronic disability than well fed children. When this happens year
7 after year, their ability to reach adulthood prepared to take care of
8 themselves is greatly diminished. All schools do not provide breakfast
9 and lunch programs for their students. During the summer months
10 children are at even greater risk of being hungry, undernourished, or
11 malnourished.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The legislature finds that the
13 supplemental food program for women, infants and children, known as
14 WIC, is cost beneficial and effective in preventing health problems in
15 pregnant and lactating women and in their newborns and young children.
16 Research shows that participation in the program prevents infant
17 mortality, reduces the number of undernourished children with retarded
18 growth, reduces the incidence of delayed or diminished cognitive
19 development, and decreases the number of low-birthweight babies. In
20 order to make this cost beneficial program available to more women and
21 children, the legislature will increase funding to the supplemental
22 food program for women, infants and children.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The legislature finds that delays in
24 receiving food stamps often drive hungry families to food banks.
25 Expediting the issuance of food stamps to eligible applicants will ease
26 some of the pressure on the food bank system. The legislature also
27 finds that although the majority of those who apply for the expedited
28 issuance of food stamps receive them within the five-day waiting

1 period, some do not. Therefore, the department of social and health
2 services is directed to issue food stamps to all eligible applicants
3 within twenty-four hours of application.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 74.04 RCW
5 to read as follows:

6 The department shall issue expedited food stamps to eligible
7 recipients within twenty-four hours of application. The department
8 shall establish an eligibility process for the expedited issuance of
9 food stamps that conforms to federal requirements and results in no
10 additional workload increase to department staff.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 74.04 RCW
12 to read as follows:

13 In determining food stamp need and eligibility, the department
14 shall exclude as income the child support exempted by 42 U.S.C. Sec.
15 657(b) or 602(a)(8)(A)(vi).

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The legislature finds that the health of
17 a community is dependent on the ability of all members of the community
18 to have nutritious food to eat. The legislature further finds that
19 children and elderly in care are often unable to provide for their own
20 nutritional needs. The legislature finds that school breakfast and
21 lunch programs, summer feeding programs, and the child and adult day
22 care feeding programs authorized by the United States department of
23 agriculture are effective in improving the health status of a community
24 and its members by addressing unmet nutritional needs by promoting the
25 health and well-being of those who are eligible to participate.
26 However, some communities in the state do not participate in these
27 programs because they do not know about them or because the sites have

1 not been established to provide the programs. The result is hunger,
2 malnutrition, and inadequate nutrition education for otherwise eligible
3 persons living in nonparticipating communities. It is the intent of
4 the legislature to increase the awareness of nutrition programs and
5 increase the availability of sites where nutritious food is served to
6 eligible children and adults.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to Title 28A RCW to
8 read as follows:

9 The community action agencies under chapter 43.63A RCW, in
10 consultation with the superintendent of public instruction, shall
11 aggressively solicit eligible schools, child and adult day care
12 centers, and other eligible organizations to participate in the
13 nutrition programs authorized by the United States department of
14 agriculture.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** A new section is added to Title 28A RCW to
16 read as follows:

17 The department of community development, through community action
18 agencies under chapter 43.63A RCW, and in consultation with the
19 superintendent of public instruction shall:

20 (1) Provide start-up funds for school breakfast programs in those
21 schools not qualifying as "severe-need schools" as defined in chapter
22 239, Laws of 1989;

23 (2) Provide funds for school districts to start or restart school
24 lunch programs;

25 (3) Provide an additional ten cents per meal reimbursement for all
26 meals served to children in schools. The per meal reimbursement shall
27 be adjusted annually to reflect the cost of living using a process
28 approved by the United States department of agriculture.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** A new section is added to chapter 43.63A RCW
2 to read as follows:

3 Community action agencies and the regional health promotion and
4 disease prevention programs created in Senate Bill No. 5347 shall:

5 (1) In conjunction with local school boards, parents and parent
6 organizations and with local associations and organizations
7 aggressively solicit programs including, but not limited to summer
8 feeding sites, after school, vacation, and weekend programs which
9 promote the physical and mental health of children through the
10 provision of nutritious meals available to all programs serving
11 eligible children of any age;

12 (2) In conjunction with local school boards, parents and parent
13 organizations, health providers and public health officials, and other
14 local associations and organizations, develop and distribute material
15 and provide training to help child nutrition programs comply with
16 United States department of agriculture guidelines and administer
17 national nutrition education training funds.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** (1) The sum of million dollars,
19 or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the
20 biennium ending June 30, 1993, from the general fund to the office of
21 the superintendent of public instruction for the purposes of
22 implementing section 8 of this act.

23 (2) The sum of million dollars, or as much thereof or may
24 be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium ending June 30, 1993,
25 from the general fund to the department of health for the purposes of
26 section 9 of this act.

27 (3) The sum of million dollars, or as much thereof as may
28 be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium ending June 30, 1993,
29 from the general fund to the department of community development for

1 community action actions to be used for the purposes of section 9 of
2 this act.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** The sum of twelve million dollars, or as
4 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium
5 ending June 30, 1993, from the general fund to the department of health
6 for the purposes of increasing the number of eligible women, infants
7 and children served by the special supplemental food program for women,
8 infants and children.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** The department of health shall report to
10 the legislature and make available to the health care cost control and
11 access commission recommendations on the effectiveness of nutrition
12 programs which include at least school nutrition programs, food stamps,
13 WIC, and nutrition counseling and any other public or private programs
14 which seek to assure that the public maintains an adequate diet. The
15 recommendations shall include an analysis of the cost benefits of
16 including supplemental nutrition and nutrition services in the basic
17 health plan, and removing them from unnecessary medical supervision to
18 decrease the cost of adequate nutrition, as a health promotion and
19 disease prevention effort.

20 The department of health shall further study and report on the
21 barriers, cultural, social, and economic, that currently exist to the
22 access of adequate private and public food and nutrition programs that
23 have a benefit to public health.

24 These studies shall be completed by October 30, 1991.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** If any provision of this act or its
26 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the

1 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other
2 persons or circumstances is not affected.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 14.** This act is necessary for the immediate
4 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
5 state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take
6 effect July 1, 1991.