

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6584

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 1, 1994

Brief Description: Providing benefits under the family emergency assistance program.

SPONSORS: Senator Rinehart; by request of Department of Social and Health Services

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rinehart, Chairman; Quigley, Vice Chairman; Bauer, Bluechel, Gaspard, Hargrove, Hochstatter, Ludwig, McDonald, Moyer, Owen, Pelz, Roach, L. Smith, Snyder, Spanel, Sutherland, Talmadge, Williams and Wojahn.

Staff: Steve Lerch (786-7474)

Hearing Dates: February 21, 1994; February 23, 1994

BACKGROUND:

The Consolidated Emergency Assistance Program (CEAP) provides cash grants for specific emergency needs such as food, shelter, clothing, and minor medical care. Payments are limited to be no more than the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) grant. Statutorily, CEAP benefits may be provided for up to two months within any 12 month period, although current DSHS rules limit benefit receipt to no more than one month within any 12 month period. Approximately half of the households which receive CEAP benefits are subsequently approved for AFDC. The federal government provides matching funds for 50 percent of CEAP costs.

SUMMARY:

As part of the 1993-95 DSHS-Division of Children and Family Services budget, CEAP was expanded so as to receive \$13 million in federal matching funds for family reconciliation and child protective services that had previously been funded with state-only funds. This bill alters statutory language to allow DSHS to claim federal funding for up to three months; it also expands the number of children eligible for such matching funds by removing language limiting eligibility to persons below the federal poverty level. These changes will not alter eligibility requirements or the one-month benefit limitation for emergency cash grants.

Appropriations: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

The bill is necessary to make statutory language consistent with departmental rules concerning eligibility for federal funds for up to three months' benefits for certain children's services. The change in income eligibility level will allow the department the flexibility to seek additional federal matching funds in the future.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Dick Anderson, DSHS, Children and Family Services