

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESHB 2901

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, February 19, 1998

**Title:** An act relating to creating a job search component within the WorkFirst program.

**Brief Description:** Requiring a WorkFirst job search component.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Children & Family Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Cooke, Tokuda, Ballasiotes, Carrell, O'Brien, McDonald, B. Thomas and Boldt).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 2/19/98 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Fairley, Franklin and Wojahn.

**Staff:** Joanne Conrad (786-7472)

**Background:** Federal and state welfare reform acts place a major emphasis on welfare recipients finding paid employment. Washington State's 1997 welfare law provided that recipients perform a job search soon after beginning to receive assistance. The Employment Security Department helps recipients with their job search.

Controversy exists regarding the optimal time period to allow for initial job search.

**Summary of Bill:** Nonexempt recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy families (TANF) participate in up to 12 weeks of initial job search. They are assisted with search activities and instructed on how to secure a job. Their employability is reviewed in the first four weeks of job search, and occasionally thereafter. The Department of Social and Health Services may assess the needs of those for whom job search is unproductive, and refer them to other work activities, to aid employability.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** A longer initial job search period with appropriate safeguards is needed. DSHS will try to assess and help those who are unsuccessful with job search.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Suzette Cook, prime sponsor (pro); Stan Marshburn, Employment Security Department (pro).