

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2902

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 26, 1998

Title: An act relating to contracting with entities that provide services for the WorkFirst program that are normally provided by civil servants.

Brief Description: Authorizing the department of social and health services to contract with private or public vendors for the WorkFirst program.

Sponsors: House Committee on Children & Family Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Cooke, Ballasiotes, Carrell, McDonald, B. Thomas, Boldt, Mitchell and Lambert).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/24/98, 2/26/98 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Benton and Strannigan.

Staff: Joanne Conrad (786-7472)

Background: Current law permits, but does not require, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to contract out with public or private entities for the performance of WorkFirst services under Washington State's 1997 Welfare Reform Act. The state's Civil Service Act at 41.06 RCW, as interpreted by the state Supreme Court, provides that state agencies do not have legal authority to contract for services that are normally provided by civil service employees, in order to prevent elimination of state employee jobs.

Summary of Bill: For the implementation of WorkFirst, DSHS may contract with public or private entities for services ordinarily provided by civil service employees, regardless of rights created by state civil service law.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: Community-based organizations are underutilized as providers of WorkFirst services.

Testimony Against: The bill is unnecessary because current law already allows contracting out. Agencies already do these types of contracts.

Testified: Rep. Suzette Cooke, prime sponsor (pro); Bev Hermanson, Maijken Keira (con); Liz Dunbar, DSHS (concerns).