

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5768

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Commerce & Labor, March 5, 1997

Title: An act relating to supported employment for persons with developmental disabilities.

Brief Description: Creating supported employment programs.

Sponsors: Senators Horn, Thibaudeau, Winsley, Anderson, Oke, McDonald, Wood, Fairley, Wojahn and Heavey.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 2/24/97, 3/5/97 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5768 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Schow, Chair; Horn, Vice Chair; Anderson, Franklin, Fraser and Heavey.

Staff: Aurora Almeda (786-7488)

Background: A joint report by the Department of Personnel (DOP) and the Department of Social and Health Services indicates there are limited employment opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities. Supported employment is designed for persons with disabilities who need individualized and sometimes long-term supports, such as job coaches and restructuring of work, to maintain employment. Historically, the private sector has provided more opportunities for supported employment than the public sector.

Some have expressed concern about the lack of a state-supported employment program.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Department of Social and Health Services, Department of Personnel, and the Office of Financial Management must work together to identify appropriate state agencies that have positions and funding conducive to implementing supported employment positions. The state agencies must designate a supported employment coordinator, and submit an annual update to the Department of Social and Health Services, Department of Personnel, and the Office of Financial Management of the supported employment program. The three coordinating departments must consult with supported employment provider associations and other interested parties. The Department of Personnel must make available, upon request of the Legislature, an annual report that evaluates the overall progress of state supported employment programs.

The creation of supported employment positions do not count against an agency's full-time equivalent employee positions.

"State agency" and "developmental disability" are defined.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Community colleges and institutions of higher education are added to the definition of "state agency." The definition of "state agency" is changed by removing the requirement of 50 full-time equivalent employees. The Department of Social and Health Services, Department of Personnel, and the Office of Financial Management must work together to identify appropriate state agencies that have positions and funding conducive to implementing supported employment positions. The state agencies must designate a supported employment coordinator, and submit an annual update to the Department of Social and Health Services, Department of Personnel, and the Office of Financial Management, of the supported employment program. The three coordinating departments must consult with supported employment provider associations and other interested parties. The Department of Personnel must make available, upon request of the Legislature, an annual report that evaluates the overall progress of state supported employment programs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 21, 1997.

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

Testimony For: Supported employment is an effective method to integrate persons with developmental disabilities into the mainstream workforce.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Trish Borden, Partnership 2000; Jane Boone, WA Association of Counties; Janet Adams, Arc of WA State; Joanne O'Neill; Edna Fund (w/concerns), DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; Toby Olson (w/concerns), Governor's Committee on Disability Issues; Bev Hermanson, WFSE; Eleanor Owen (w/concerns), WAMI.