

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6418

As Passed Senate, February 17, 1998

Title: An act relating to implementing amendments relating to child support contained in the federal personal responsibility and work opportunity reconciliation act of 1996.

Brief Description: Implementing amendments to the federal personal responsibility and work opportunity reconciliation act of 1996.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Deccio, Wojahn, Fairley, Wood and Winsley; by request of Department of Social and Health Services).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/27/98, 2/6/98 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 2/17/98, 48-1.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6418 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Joanne Conrad (786-7472)

Background: The federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 ("welfare reform") made significant changes to the child support enforcement system within and between states. The intent of the changes was to increase collectibility of ordered support, by improved tracking of obligors, including increased use of Social Security numbers as identifiers, and by increasing the accurate and timely reporting of new hires, among other changes.

Compliance with the child support requirements of federal welfare reform is a condition for receipt of certain federal funding for poor children and families.

Summary of Bill: A seven-day time period for remittance of withheld earnings is specified. Parents provide certain information to the state child support case registry, and addresses of recipients are protected, under certain circumstances. Agricultural industry reporting is facilitated.

The location of a noncustodial parent is protected upon request. Penalties for false reporting or failure to report new hires are specified and increased. Federal employer identification numbers are used by employers in reporting, replacing various other identifiers. The Governor and the Department of Social and Health Services seek a waiver from Social Security number tracking provisions of the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, except for Sections 1, 5 and 7 which takes effect on October 1, 1998.

Testimony For: The bill is needed to facilitate parent location and new hire tracking. Welfare reform depends on better child support collection. Federal funding depends upon enacting these statutory changes.

Testimony Against: Social Security numbers used as identifiers are invasive and may cause security problems.

Testified: PRO: Jay Inslee, US Department of Health and Human Services; Elizabeth Morgan, DSHS; Chris Cheney, WA Growers Association; CON: Doug Klunda, ACLU.

House Amendment(s): DSHS is required to seek a waiver from a federal requirement to place Social Security numbers on license applications, and provides that if a waiver is not granted, licensing authorities will collect Social Security numbers from applicants, but will not display them on the face of the license, and will not disclose them unless required by state or federal law.