

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6581

As Passed Senate, February 14, 1998

Title: An act relating to standards for determining child support obligations for parents with a combined monthly net income of less than six hundred dollars.

Brief Description: Revising standards for determining child support obligations.

Sponsors: Senators Roach and Fairley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 2/2/98 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/14/98, 44-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Johnson, Vice Chair; Fairley, Kline, Long, McCaslin, Stevens, Thibaudeau and Zarelli.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: The Washington child support schedule establishes an absolute minimum support amount of \$25 per child per month for parents with a combined monthly net income of \$600 or less. The Western District of the U.S. District Court has held that the Washington statute conflicts with federal law which requires a rebuttable presumption that the award is the correct amount of support. The Washington Court of Appeals recently ruled that the Washington statute is preempted by the federal statutes.

Summary of Bill: When the combined monthly net income of the parents is \$600 or less, a support order of not less than \$25 per child per month must be entered unless the obligor establishes that it would be unjust or inappropriate. The court takes into consideration the best interests of the child and the circumstances of each parent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The change would bring the statutes in compliance with procedures already being used in the administrative forum.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Elizabeth Morgan, Department of Child Support Services; Northwest Women's Law Center.