

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5299

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor & Workforce Development, February 15, 1999

Title: An act relating to the residency requirement for recipients of temporary assistance for needy families.

Brief Description: Eliminating the residency requirement for TANF eligibility.

Sponsors: Senators Fairley, Kohl-Welles, Kline and Wojahn.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor & Workforce Development: 2/2/99, 2/15/99 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5299 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Hochstatter, Kline, Oke and Wojahn.

Staff: Joanne Conrad (786-7472)

Background: Washington State's 1997 Welfare Reform Act limited the amount of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash grant assistance for families newly arriving in Washington State to the benefit amount of their prior state of residence.

Congressional welfare reform had indicated that such differential treatment was allowable for purposes of welfare reform. Several other states, including California, enacted provisions similar to Washington State's.

Recently, however, a federal district court opinion, *Roe v. Anderson*, 97-16326 (01-28-98), upheld an injunction preventing California from enforcing its durational residency provision. The case is now before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The durational residency provision limiting a family's TANF grant assistance to the amount allowable in their prior state of residence is eliminated. All Washington residents are treated equally for purposes of TANF grant calculation, including legal immigrants.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Repeal of the durational residency requirement is extended to legal immigrants.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: People do not migrate to Washington State for welfare benefits. Poor families have the same needs, regardless of how long they have lived in the state. Federal court has enjoined enforcement of the residency requirement.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Liz Dunbar, DSHS; Eric Paige, WA State Catholic Conference; Jean Coleman, Welfare Rights Org. Coalition.