

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESB 5490

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As Passed Senate, January 28, 2000

**Title:** An act relating to employment assessments for recipients of temporary assistance for needy families.

**Brief Description:** Requiring temporary assistance for needy families employment assessments to screen for learning disabilities.

**Sponsors:** Senators Wojahn, Winsley, Kline, Fairley, B. Sheldon, McAuliffe, Thibaudeau, Snyder, Rasmussen and Costa.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Labor & Workforce Development: 2/2/99, 2/4/99 [DPA].  
Passed Senate, 2/17/99, 46-3; 1/28/00, 33-11.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

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

**Staff:** Joanne Conrad (786-7472)

**Background:** Recent studies show a link between poverty and learning disabilities. According to reports, over the past few years, screening tools for learning disabilities have become simpler, easier to administer, and less costly. As technology advances, it may also become possible to perform electromagnetic imaging or computer scanning for certain types of learning disabilities. It is believed that early identification of those with learning disabilities may help facilitate appropriate services.

**Summary of Bill:** The Department of Social and Health Services, as part of the existing statutorily-required assessment of recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), emphasizes performance of a basic assessment to screen for learning disabilities. The assessment may be performed by the department or by contract.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** Identification of TANF recipients with learning disabilities will help to target appropriate services and interventions leading to possible self-sufficiency. Those with learning disabilities may need legal accommodation under the ADA.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Jennifer Barrett, law student; Melinda Grovengo, Ph.D; Liz Dunbar, DSHS; Cherie Tessier, ARC of WA; Donna Patrick, DD Council.