

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6364

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor & Workforce Development, February 3, 2000

Title: An act relating to including preapprenticeship programs in the definition of work activity.

Brief Description: Including preapprenticeship programs in the definition of work activity.

Sponsors: Senators Wojahn, Hochstatter, Fairley, Deccio, Prentice, Hargrove, Thibaudeau, Jacobsen, Winsley, Costa, Kohl-Welles and Oke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor & Workforce Development: 1/24/2000, 2/3/2000 [DPA, DNPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

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

Minority Report: Do not pass as amended.

Signed by Senator Hochstatter.

Staff: Elizabeth Mitchell (786-7430)

Background: Apprenticeships consist of paid on-the-job training which leads to journey level status in a given trade. A person must generally meet certain qualifications in order to enter an apprenticeship program including: reliable childcare and transportation, possession of a driver's license, fluency in English, and sufficient physical strength to perform apprenticeship tasks.

Preapprenticeship training programs teach low-income women the skills they need to apply for an apprenticeship. Enrollment in most preapprenticeship training programs does not guarantee placement in an apprenticeship.

If a WorkFirst participant is unable to find paid unsubsidized employment during an initial 12 week job search period, he or she is referred to a "work activity." Work activities include on the job training, vocational educational training, and job skills training. Currently, job skills training must be directly related to employment to be considered a work activity.

Summary of Amended Bill: Enrollment in a preapprenticeship training program with duration of up to 20 weeks is considered pre-employment training and is therefore a work activity in the WorkFirst program.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: A maximum duration of up to 20 weeks is specified, and enrollment in such programs is explicitly considered as pre-employment training.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Apprenticeships and preapprenticeship training programs are a good way to help WorkFirst clients attain livable wage jobs. Many skills are needed to attain an apprenticeship, and often clients need more time to master those skills than the 12 weeks that are currently allowed by WorkFirst. There is currently a high demand for apprentices.

Testimony Against: The Employment Security Department supports time limited programs with a near guarantee of placement in an apprenticeship.

Testified: PRO: Randi Loomis, Washington State Labor Council; Susan Crane, Office of Port Jobs; Gay Kiesling and Kathleen Mulins, ANEW; Tony Lee, Fremont Public Association; Robert Dilger, Washington State Building and Construction Trade Council; Concerns: Russ Lidman, Employment Security Department.