

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5031

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, February 22, 2001

Title: An act relating to transportation for recipients of temporary assistance for needy families.

Brief Description: Creating a vehicle ownership program for recipients of temporary assistance for needy families.

Sponsors: Senators Franklin, Thibaudeau, Kohl-Welles, Regala and Costa.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 1/19/01, 2/22/01 [DPS-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5031 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Costa, Vice Chair; Carlson, Franklin, Hewitt, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Long and Stevens.

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: The lack of reliable transportation is a tangible barrier to consistent employment for families receiving temporary assistance to needy families (TANF).

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Department of Social and Health Services must establish a wheels to work program as a public-private partnership. The program provides qualified families on TANF with the ability to own a car. The program accepts donated vehicles and leases them to qualified adult TANF recipients for 12 months. At the end of the 12-month lease period, the title to the vehicle is transferred to the recipient.

For the first year of the program, the department must contract with a private nonprofit entity to operate in three locations, one in Pierce County, one in Yakima County, and one in Spokane County. The program must be expanded statewide one year after implementation.

The Department of Social and Health Services is directed to contract with the Washington State Institute for public policy to perform a study of the wheels to work program, including at the minimum, a cost-benefit analysis and an evaluation of the extent to which access to a personal vehicle enabled the family on assistance to progress toward economic independence.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Donated vehicles are available for a 12-month lease period. Participants will have 60 days to find new employment or the vehicle must be returned to the program. Crimes and driving related offenses for which a participant would have to return the vehicle are specified. Neither the sales nor lease of vehicles under this

program are subject to state tax to the Department of Social and Health Services, the nonprofit entity, or program participants. The use of a vehicle under this program is not subject to state use tax.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 11, 2001.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: Transportation to work is often difficult to manage given the competing demands of child care, school, and employment. Public transportation is not always available or convenient. Access to reliable transportation can make regular employment possible.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Rosa Franklin (pro); Bronwyn Mauldin, Office of Port Jobs (pro); Jim Shober, Employment Security Department (pro); Jeanne Ward, Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (pro); Aiko Schaefer, Statewide Poverty Action Network (pro); Sara Fleming Merton, Washington Association of Churches (pro); Adrienne Newlon, Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition (pro).