
SENATE BILL 6595

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2004 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Eide, Brown, Fraser, Prentice, Kline, McAuliffe, Keiser, Fairley and Spanel

Read first time 01/26/2004. Referred to Committee on Children & Family Services & Corrections.

1 AN ACT Relating to child care workers; adding new sections to
2 chapter 74.13 RCW; and making an appropriation.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
5 to read as follows:

6 The legislature finds that as of 2000, child care workers in the
7 state earned an average hourly wage of eight dollars and twenty-two
8 cents, only fifty-eight percent received medical insurance through
9 employers, only sixty-six percent received paid sick leave, and only
10 seventy-three percent received paid vacation. The legislature further
11 finds that low wages for child care workers create a barrier for
12 individuals entering the profession, result in child care workers
13 leaving the profession in order to earn a living wage in another
14 profession, and make it difficult for child care workers to afford
15 professional education and training. As a result, the availability of
16 quality child care in the state suffers.

17 The legislature intends to increase wages to child care workers
18 through establishing a wage ladder that provides increased wages for

1 child care workers based on their work experience, level of
2 responsibility, and education.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
4 to read as follows:

5 The division of child care and early learning in the department of
6 social and health services shall establish a wage ladder for child care
7 workers in licensed child care centers that meet the following
8 criteria: (1) At least ten percent of child care slots are dedicated
9 to children whose care is subsidized by the state or any political
10 subdivision thereof or any local government; (2) agree to adopt the
11 wage ladder; and (3) meet further program standards as established by
12 rule pursuant to section 4 of this act.

13 The wage ladder shall include wage increments for levels of
14 education, years of relevant experience, levels of work responsibility,
15 and relevant early childhood education credits. The wage ladder shall
16 provide a fifty cents an hour wage increment for all workers listed in
17 the state training and registry system.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
19 to read as follows:

20 Child care centers adopting the wage ladder established pursuant to
21 section 2 of this act shall increase wages for child care workers who
22 have earned a high school diploma or GED certificate, gain additional
23 years of experience, or accept increasing levels of responsibility in
24 providing child care, in accordance with the wage ladder. The
25 department of social and health services shall pay wage increments for
26 child care workers employed by child care centers adopting the wage
27 ladder established pursuant to section 2 of this act who earn early
28 childhood education credits or who are listed in the state training and
29 registry system, in accordance with the wage ladder.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
31 to read as follows:

32 The division of child care and early learning in the department of
33 social and health services shall establish further program standards by
34 rule. The division of child care and early learning shall also study

1 the impact of the wage ladder on the quality of child care and the
2 child care work force, and report its findings to the governor and the
3 appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2005.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The sum of two million dollars, or as much
5 thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated from the general fund to
6 the department of social and health services for the fiscal year ending
7 June 30, 2005, to carry out the purposes of this act.

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