

5249

Sponsor(s): Senators Kohl-Welles, Shin, Carlson and Schmidt

Brief Description: Creating the higher education for lifelong progress program.

SB 5249 - DIGEST

Declares an intent to provide access to postsecondary education for qualified adult recipients of temporary assistance for needy families, while maintaining the emphasis on employment that is the hallmark of the WorkFirst program.

Intends to provide temporary assistance for needy families grants, including working connections child care and tuition assistance, to college-qualified individuals, with the goal of providing a means for highly motivated welfare recipients to complete college, exit assistance, and secure careers to benefit themselves, their families, and society.

Directs the department to establish the HELP program. The goal of the program is to help college-qualified parents who have dependent children, who are in need and are eligible for temporary assistance for needy families, receive up to two years of undergraduate education or training.

Directs the department to contract with the Washington state institute for public policy for the performance of an outcome study of HELP program participants. The study shall, at a minimum: (1) Track degree or certificate completion by participants;

(2) Report on wage progression of participants;

(3) Report on the program's dropout rate, including temporary assistance for needy families' recidivism;

(4) Quantify the projected increase in lifetime earnings of program graduates; and

(5) Report on self-identified enhancers and barriers to success in postsecondary education experience by the study population.

Requires the results of the outcome study to be reported annually, no later than January 15th, beginning in 2005, to the governor and to the appropriate committees of the legislature.