

HB 1636-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Declares an intent to increase wages to child care workers through establishing a child care career and wage ladder that provides increased wages for child care workers based on their work experience, level of responsibility, and education. To the extent practicable within available funds, this child care career and wage ladder shall mirror the successful child care career and wage ladder pilot project operated by the state between 2000 and 2003.

Declares that, while it is the intent to establish the vision of a statewide child care career and wage ladder that will enhance employment quality and stability for child care workers, the legislature also recognizes that funding allocations will determine the extent of statewide implementation of a child care career and wage ladder.

Requires the division of child care and early learning in the department of social and health services to establish a child care career and wage ladder in licensed child care centers, subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this specific purpose, that meet the following criteria: (1) At least ten percent of child care slots are dedicated to children whose care is subsidized by the state or any political subdivision thereof or any local government;

(2) The center agrees to adopt the child care career and wage ladder, which, at a minimum, shall be at the same pay schedule as existed in the previous child care career and wage ladder pilot project; and

(3) The center meets further program standards as established by rule pursuant to this act.

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 1636-S

May 17, 2005

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,
The House of Representatives of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning, without my approval as to Section 4, Substitute House Bill No. 1636 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to child care workers."

This bill establishes a childcare career and wage ladder in the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), and requires it to be implemented only if funds are appropriated for this purpose. Funds were not appropriated. Childcare career and wage ladders effectively increase the salary and benefits of childcare workers. The DSHS had a childcare career and wage ladder pilot project in place a few years ago but eliminated it when the WorkFirst Program faced a budget shortfall.

Section 4 would require the DSHS to establish program standards, study the impact of the childcare career and wage ladder on the quality of childcare and the childcare workforce, and report its findings to the Legislature by December 1, 2006. Section 4 is not subject to the "within funds specifically appropriated for this purpose" clause in the bill. Section 4 should be vetoed; it makes no sense for the DSHS to take the time to create a report for a program that does not exist.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Section 4 of Substitute House Bill No. 1636.

With the exception of Section 4, Substitute House Bill No. 1636 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine O. Gregoire
Governor