

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 3065

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to life transitions multipurpose programs.

Brief Description: Regarding life transitions multipurpose programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Roberts, Dickerson, Appleton, Lantz, Clibborn, Rodne, Walsh, Kenney and Morrell.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/30/08, 1/31/08 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes the name of the Act from "Displaced Homemaker" to "Life Transitions" and references of "Displaced Homemaker" to "Transitioning Homemaker."
- Removes the distinction between centers and programs and refers to all as multi-purpose programs.
- Expands the definition of "homemaker."

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Wallace, Chair; Sells, Vice Chair; Hankins, Hasegawa, Jarrett, McIntire, Roberts and Sommers.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Anderson, Ranking Minority Member; Schmick.

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

The Displaced Homemaker Act (Act) was enacted in 1979. The stated purpose was to establish guidelines under which the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

(SBCTC) would contract to establish centers and programs to provide necessary training opportunities, counseling, and services for displaced homemakers so that they could become independent and economically secure.

In the 2005-06 biennium, approximately 40,000 people received counseling, job search assistance, resume help, and local referrals. Another 1,183 people participated in job and educational readiness classes.

Those currently contracting with the SBCTC to provide services include:

- Clark College;
- Community Colleges of Spokane;
- Green River Community College;
- Lower Columbia College;
- Olympic College;
- Pathways for Women, Young Women's Christian Association;
- Pierce College;
- Skagit Valley College;
- Walla Walla Community College; and
- Whatcom Community College.

A review of client demographics shows that:

- 54 percent have children or dependents under the age of 18;
- 30 percent reported receiving food stamps; and
- 47 percent have no post-high school education.

Summary of Bill:

The name of the Act is changed from "Displaced Homemaker" to "Life Transitions." References to "displaced homemaker" are similarly changed to "transitioning homemaker."

The requirement that the homemaker have worked in the home on an unsalaried basis for 10 years is reduced to five years. Death or disability of a domestic partner, as well as of a spouse, is recognized as triggering the need to transition into the workforce. Financial dependency requirements are revised to reflect that homemakers may need to secure employment because of the reduced earning capacity of the primary family wage earner, whether that person is a spouse or a domestic partner.

All references to "centers" are deleted and the distinctions between "centers" and "programs" removed. Instead of both "centers" and "programs," all are referred to as "multipurpose programs" and may provide the same types of information, referral, and services.

The requirement that the SBCTC consult with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction is removed.

The nondiscrimination section is revised to reflect the language currently found in the Washington Law Against Discrimination.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Much has changed over the 30 years since the original program was put in place. The updates, including the change from "displaced" to "transitioning," reflect how things have changed. The terminology is modernized and administrative flexibility is added. This program is doing a fabulous job in teaching people how to navigate their way into, or back into, the work force or educational opportunities.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Roberts, prime sponsor; Maddy Thompson, Workforce Board; Deborah Devolio, Pierce College; and Erin Brown, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.