

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6713

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 07, 2008

Title: An act relating to early intervention services for children with disabilities.

Brief Description: Requiring the department of social and health services to contract with counties to provide early intervention services for children with developmental disabilities.

Sponsors: Senators Kauffman, Brandland, McAuliffe, Tom, Keiser, Rasmussen, Hargrove, Kastama, McDermott, Kilmer, Kline, Oemig, Regala, Fairley, Franklin, Kohl-Welles, Delvin, Roach, Pridemore, Hewitt, Rockefeller, King, Shin, Fraser, Parlette and Haugen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/06/08, 2/07/08 [DP-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Fairley, Kastama, Kohl-Welles and Marr.

Staff: Rhoda Donkin (786-7465)

Background: Federal law directs states to provide services to families with infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) coordinates a statewide system of early intervention programs for eligible children and their families. Currently, only some counties in Washington provide funding for these programs, and among those that do, the level differs significantly.

Summary of Bill: DSHS must contract with all counties to provide funding for early intervention services to eligible children. Each county must partner with local lead agencies, school districts, and birth-to-three providers, to provide or contract for early intervention services to all eligible children within the county who have been identified as needing services.

DSHS is required to contract with each county through existing employment and day programs to provide funding for early intervention services. The rate of funding required for new and existing persons is described, and includes the amount required by counties.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 21, 2008.

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.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: These children get kicked out of pre-school and day care. They need early intervention that can make a lifelong difference. We need a coordinated, comprehensive system focused on the youngest children. Early services can prevent children from ever needing special education services. The program was created in federal statute, and has been underfunded. Counties participate at very different levels, and this should be corrected.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Ray Jensen, King County; Cassie Johnston, Cecile Lindquist, WEECARE Coalition; Margaret-Lee Thompson, Betsy MCalister, King County Parent Coalition for DD; Chris Morris, Parent to Parent of Thurston Co.; Suzanne Quigley, Listen and Talk.