

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6178

As of April 18, 2009

Title: An act relating to general assistance..

Brief Description: Relating to general assistance.

Sponsors: Senators Prentice and Tom.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 4/18/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Michael Bezanson (786-7449)

Background: General Assistance-Unemployable (GA-U) is a state-funded program providing cash and medical benefits to adults who are physically or mentally incapacitated and expected to be unemployable for more than 90 days. The primary incapacity cannot be alcohol or drug dependency.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is required to provide cash benefits to anyone who is eligible. To the extent that funds are available, DSHS may provide medical care services to GA-U recipients.

GA-U recipients are required to accept available services, such as drug treatment or mental health services, as a condition of receiving benefits.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): The GA-U cash benefit is aligned to the medical benefit by making the cash benefit a discretionary program. The caseload size and appropriations for the GA-U program are to be determined in the Omnibus Appropriations Act.

DSHS is provided rulemaking authority to enact time limits, use temporary waiting lists, and to freeze program enrollments in order to manage caseloads to the appropriation levels.

Appropriation: None.

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.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2009.