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HOUSE BILL 2106

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State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Representatives Kagi, Roberts, Kenney, and Morrell

Read first time 02/10/09. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & Children's Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to improving child welfare outcomes through the  
2 phased implementation of strategic and proven reforms; adding a new  
3 section to chapter 74.13 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that extensive  
6 research conducted by the Washington state institute for public policy  
7 demonstrates the potential for appreciable savings in the state's child  
8 welfare budget by deploying a core set of evidence-based and promising  
9 programs designed to strengthen families and prevent children from  
10 entering the foster care system. The legislature further finds that  
11 achieving improved outcomes for child safety and long-term family  
12 strength and well-being requires renewed thinking and a greater  
13 emphasis on evidence-based and promising prevention services, earlier  
14 positive engagement with parents and children, and more effective  
15 partnerships with communities and private partners. The legislature  
16 also finds that the goal of achieving lasting change in the state's  
17 child welfare system requires building and sustaining the serving  
18 capacity of evidence-based and promising programs through the  
19 reinvestment of savings from reduced foster care caseloads. The

1 legislature further finds that implementation of these reforms should  
2 be approached through collaborative analysis and planning that includes  
3 the relevant state agencies, community partners, and other  
4 stakeholders. The legislature intends to direct the development of a  
5 plan for the first phase of implementation to begin January 1, 2010.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW  
7 to read as follows:

8 (1) The children's administration within the department of social  
9 and health services shall collaborate with community partners and  
10 stakeholders in one demonstration region to jointly develop a plan for  
11 implementation of a core set of performance-based contracts to provide  
12 an array of evidence-based and promising prevention and early  
13 intervention services to children and families who are at risk for an  
14 out-of-home placement or the filing of a dependency petition. The  
15 implementation plan must describe: (a) What services should be  
16 delivered under the contracts in order to assure providers have the  
17 flexibility to provide adequate, appropriate, and relevant evidence-  
18 based and promising services to individual families; (b) what outcome  
19 measures will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of performance  
20 under the contracts; (c) how families will be referred to contracted  
21 providers, including the protocols for continued communication or  
22 coordination between providers and the children's administration in  
23 order to assure child safety and well-being and to promote the family's  
24 engagement; and (d) the optimum balance of shared responsibility for  
25 child protection and child welfare between the state and community-  
26 based providers, including a description of the core functions to be  
27 performed by each. In selecting the first demonstration region, the  
28 children's administration shall consider the capacity for regionwide  
29 delivery of an array of evidence-based and promising prevention and  
30 early intervention services to children and families, paying particular  
31 attention to the research developed by the Washington state institute  
32 for public policy; the willingness and ability of the community and  
33 stakeholders to collaborate in development of a plan by the reporting  
34 date; and whether the region includes any existing multidisciplinary or  
35 multisystem work groups engaged in performance improvement or reform  
36 efforts. The children's administration shall report to the governor  
37 and the appropriate committees of the legislature by November 30, 2009,

1 with a plan to begin implementation January 1, 2010. Not later than  
2 December 1, 2010, the children's administration shall provide the  
3 governor and the legislature with a status update and recommendations  
4 for continued progress.

5 (2) One or more knowledgeable representatives from the agencies  
6 listed in this subsection, jointly, shall develop the procedures  
7 necessary for the reinvestment in the demonstration region of savings  
8 resulting from reduced foster care caseloads in the demonstration  
9 region into evidence-based early intervention and prevention programs  
10 designed to prevent the need for or reduce the duration of foster care  
11 placements by keeping children safely in their homes. The following  
12 agencies shall brief the governor and the legislature by November 30,  
13 2009, regarding the accounting, budgeting, and allocation or other  
14 procedures developed to begin implementing the reinvestment strategy  
15 beginning January 1, 2010:

- 16 (a) The caseload forecast council;  
17 (b) The department of social and health services; and  
18 (c) The office of financial management.

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