

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6153

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Human Services & Corrections, February 2, 2012

**Title:** An act relating to school attendance of children whose parents or guardians receive state assistance.

**Brief Description:** Regarding school attendance of children whose parents or guardians receive state assistance.

**Sponsors:** Senators McAuliffe and Chase.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Human Services & Corrections: 1/17/12, 2/02/12 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6153 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Stevens, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Harper, McAuliffe and Padden.

**Staff:** Jennifer Strus (786-7316)

**Background:** There are a variety of programs offering various forms of state assistance, cash and otherwise, to individuals and families who qualify. Eligibility requirements for each program are different, but most of the programs are needs-based. Some examples of state assistance programs include: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; the Aged, Blind, and Disabled Program; the Housing and Essential Needs Program; and State Food Assistance. No state assistance program has an eligibility requirement that ensures the children of the assistance recipient attend school.

**Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute):** The current TANF program outcomes are amended to include the enrollment in school and consistent school attendance, including in-home schooling situations, by the school-aged children of recipients.

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute):** Adds to the list of TANF outcome goals the

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enrollment in school and consistent school attendance, including in-home schooling situations, by the school-aged children of recipients

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 16, 2012.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill:** PRO: This bill is to make sure that parents and their school-aged children are following the compulsory school attendance law in this state.

CON: This bill would make it harder for parents to get their kids to school by removing the resources parents need to keep their kids in school. This bill is not the solution to compulsory school attendance law violations. The bill would have the opposite effect of its intended goal.

OTHER: Support the idea that children should be in school, but this bill is not the way to go about it. It is not fair to call out kids who have the misfortune to have families on public assistance. There is not proof that compulsory school attendance is a particular problem within the public assistance population.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor.

CON: Bob Cooper, WA Defender Assn.; Robin Zukoski, Columbia Legal Services.

OTHER: Lonnie Johns-Brown, National Organization of Women.