

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6223

As Passed Senate, February 8, 2012

Title: An act relating to repealing the early supplemental security income transition project.

Brief Description: Repealing the early supplemental security income transition project.

Sponsors: Senators Regala, Hargrove and Stevens; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 1/26/12 [DP].

Passed Senate: 2/08/12, 44-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Jennifer Strus (786-7316)

Background: In 2010 the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) implemented the Early Supplemental Security Income Transition Project (ESSITP) in King, Pierce and Spokane counties. The purpose of the project is to move persons likely eligible for supplemental security income benefits (SSI) from the aged, blind or disabled program (ABD) and the medical program to SSI as quickly as possible. The program is to be implemented through performance-based contracts with managed health care systems providing medical care services or other qualified entities.

The entities with whom DSHS contracts are responsible for the following:

- systematically screening persons receiving medical benefits at the point of eligibility determination or shortly thereafter to determine if the person should be referred for medical or behavioral health evaluations to determine if they are likely eligible for SSI;
- sharing the results with DSHS;
- managing medical care services and aged, blind, and disabled assistance incapacity evaluations to provide timely access to needed medical and behavioral health

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- evaluations and standardizing health care providers' conduct of incapacity evaluations;
- maintaining a centralized appointment and clinical data system; and
- assisting persons receiving medical care services benefits with obtaining additional medical or behavioral health exams needed to meet the disability standard for SSI and with submission of applications for SSI benefits.

The performance goals of the program are as follows:

- screening persons receiving medical care services within 30 days of entering the program; and
- transferring 75 percent of persons receiving medical care services that appear likely to qualify for SSI to the ABD program within four months of applying for the ABD program.

The initial focus of the ESSITP is to be on persons who have been receiving medical care services or ABD assistance for 12 or more months.

DSHS is to report to the Governor and the Legislature, on whether the ESSITP is meeting the performance goals no later than December 1, 2011.

Summary of Bill: The statute establishing the ESSITP is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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: This project was piloted under the theory that it would move clients more quickly to SSI. Unfortunately, the agency which DSHS contracted with found that the system did not work as well as they had hoped mainly because of the personal circumstances of the clients. Many of the clients are homeless or transient so it was difficult to reach them about appointments, etc., so there was a bit of wasted time. The project did help identify the issues in working more quickly with the clients but the program itself is no longer needed. There should be some fiscal savings associated with this program repeal.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Dave Stillman, DSHS.