
SENATE BILL 6115

State of Washington

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By Senators Keiser, Becker, Kastama, Conway, and Pflug

Read first time 01/11/12. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to the health care workforce; amending RCW
2 28C.18.120; reenacting and amending RCW 28C.18.010; adding new sections
3 to chapter 28C.18 RCW; and adding a new section to chapter 35.21 RCW.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28C.18.010 and 2009 c 151 s 5 are each reenacted and
6 amended to read as follows:

7 Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in
8 this section apply throughout this title.

9 (1) "Adult basic education" means instruction designed to achieve
10 mastery of skills in reading, writing, oral communication, and
11 computation at a level sufficient to allow the individual to function
12 effectively as a parent, worker, and citizen in the United States,
13 commensurate with that individual's actual ability level, and includes
14 English as a second language and preparation and testing service for
15 the general education development exam.

16 (2) "Board" means the workforce training and education coordinating
17 board.

18 (3) "Director" means the director of the workforce training and
19 education coordinating board.

1 (4) "Industry skill panel" means a regional partnership of
2 business, labor, and education leaders that identifies skill gaps in a
3 key economic cluster and enables the industry and public partners to
4 respond to and be proactive in addressing workforce skill needs.

5 (5) "Task force" means the health care personnel shortage task
6 force.

7 (6) "Training system" means programs and courses of secondary
8 vocational education, technical college programs and courses, community
9 college vocational programs and courses, private career school and
10 college programs and courses, employer-sponsored training, adult basic
11 education programs and courses, programs and courses funded by the
12 federal workforce investment act, programs and courses funded by the
13 federal vocational act, programs and courses funded under the federal
14 adult education act, publicly funded programs and courses for adult
15 literacy education, and apprenticeships, and programs and courses
16 offered by private and public nonprofit organizations that are
17 representative of communities or significant segments of communities
18 and provide job training or adult literacy services.

19 ((+6)) (7) "Vocational education" means organized educational
20 programs offering a sequence of courses which are directly related to
21 the preparation or retraining of individuals in paid or unpaid
22 employment in current or emerging occupations requiring other than a
23 baccalaureate or advanced degree. Such programs shall include
24 competency-based applied learning which contributes to an individual's
25 academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning, and problem-solving skills,
26 work attitudes, general employability skills, and the occupational-
27 specific skills necessary for economic independence as a productive and
28 contributing member of society. Such term also includes applied
29 technology education.

30 ((+7)) (8) "Workforce development council" means a local workforce
31 investment board as established in P.L. 105-220 Sec. 117.

32 ((+8)) (9) "Workforce skills" means skills developed through
33 applied learning that strengthen and reinforce an individual's academic
34 knowledge, critical thinking, problem solving, and work ethic and,
35 thereby, develop the employability, occupational skills, and management
36 of home and work responsibilities necessary for economic independence.

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28C.18.120 and 2003 c 278 s 2 are each amended to read
2 as follows:

3 The board shall convene a health care personnel shortage task
4 force. The task force shall meet biannually to establish and maintain
5 a state strategic plan ensuring an adequate supply of health care
6 personnel and safeguarding the ability of the health care delivery
7 system in Washington state to provide quality, accessible health care
8 to Washington residents. The task force must:

9 (1) ~~((Facilitate ongoing collaboration among stakeholders in~~
10 ~~order))~~ Consist of stakeholders who shall work collaboratively with
11 each other and the board to address the health care personnel shortage.
12 The stakeholder groups are to be selected by the board, but must
13 include at least one representative of long-term care workers;

14 (2) ~~((In collaboration with stakeholders, establish and maintain a~~
15 ~~state strategic plan for ensuring an adequate supply of health care~~
16 ~~personnel that safeguards the ability of the health care delivery~~
17 ~~system in Washington state to provide quality, accessible health care~~
18 ~~to residents of Washington; and~~

19 ~~(3))~~ Make recommendations on development of a single portal for
20 entry into the health care professions in order to recruit more
21 individuals into entry level health care occupations and promote
22 adequate preparation prior to entry;

23 (3) Identify ways to increase educational capacity and efficiency
24 in health care training programs to enable more people to qualify to
25 work in health care occupations. This must include methods to train
26 people currently in the workforce and development of a career ladder to
27 move people from entry level health care occupations to positions that
28 require more training and experience;

29 (4) Identify ways to monitor, manage, and retain critical
30 professions where they are most needed. Recommendations may include:

31 (a) Creation of new professions in both dental and medical fields
32 that are trained and compensated for work in underserved communities;
33 and

34 (b) Ways to coordinate between health professions, education and
35 training opportunities including apprenticeships, and ways to expand
36 use of professionals trained outside the state;

37 (5) Examine the scope of practice of health care licensees to
38 ensure that licensees work at the top of the scope of their licenses

1 and also issue recommendations on scope of practice issues as they
2 relate to ensuring an adequate supply of qualified health care
3 personnel. The task force may assist the department of health in
4 performing sunrise reviews relating to scope of practice;

5 (6) Develop a data collection and analysis system to assist health
6 workforce supply and demand;

7 (7) Enable local communities to implement strategies to alleviate
8 the health care personnel shortage in their areas. This includes
9 assisting local fire departments in developing a community worker
10 program under section 5 of this act;

11 (8) Develop a mechanism to ensure continued collaboration among
12 stakeholders, track progress, create accountability, and to plan for
13 future health workforce needs;

14 (9) Investigate other activities as the task force deems necessary
15 to develop a qualified health care workforce;

16 (10) Coordinate grant activity as provided in section 4 of this
17 act; and

18 (11) Report to the governor and legislature by December 31, 2003,
19 and annually thereafter, on progress on the state strategic plan and
20 make additional recommendations as necessary.

21 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 28C.18 RCW
22 to read as follows:

23 The task force may receive and expend federal funds and private
24 gifts or grants, which funds must be expended in accordance with any
25 conditions upon which the funds are contingent. Money received under
26 this section may be used to support task force activities, including
27 providing job training funding to entry level professions identified in
28 the state strategic plan.

29 NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. A new section is added to chapter 28C.18 RCW
30 to read as follows:

31 The task force must develop a health care workforce grant
32 assistance program. The program must provide assistance to Washington-
33 based grant applicants of state and federal health care workforce
34 grants and must:

35 (1) Coordinate the activities of grantees who have received federal

- 1 grants for health care workforce activities to ensure they are abiding
2 by and consulting with the state strategic plan;
3 (2) Provide grant writing assistance to grant applicants; and
4 (3) Coordinate with local economic development councils.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 35.21 RCW
6 to read as follows:

7 (1) Any fire department may develop a community assistance referral
8 and education services program to provide community outreach and
9 assistance to residents of its district in order to advance injury and
10 illness prevention within their communities. The program should
11 identify members of the community who use the 911 system for low acuity
12 assistance calls and connect them to their primary care providers,
13 other health care professionals, low-cost medication programs, and
14 other social services. The program may also provide a fire department-
15 based nonemergency contact in order to provide an alternative resource
16 to the 911 system. The program may hire health care professionals as
17 needed.

18 (2) A fire department may seek grant opportunities and private
19 gifts in order to support its community assistance referral and
20 education services program.

21 (3) In developing a community assistance referral and education
22 services program, a fire department may consult with the health care
23 personnel shortage task force to identify health care professions
24 capable of working in a nontraditional setting and providing
25 assistance, referral, and education services.

26 (4) Community assistance referral and education services programs
27 implemented under this section must, at least annually, measure any
28 reduction of repeated use of the 911 emergency system and any reduction
29 in avoidable emergency room trips attributable to implementation of the
30 program. Results of findings under this subsection are reportable to
31 the legislature or other local governments upon request.

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