
Early Learning & Human Services Committee

HB 2335

Brief Description: Concerning extended foster care services.

Sponsors: Representatives Roberts, Parker, Kagi, Carlyle, Freeman, Goodman, Walsh, Sawyer, Senn, Zeiger, Jinkins, Muri, Reykdal and Ormsby.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands eligibility criteria to allow a youth to request extended foster care services if the youth engages in employment for 80 hours or more per month or if the youth is not able to engage in any established qualifying activities due to a documented medical condition.
- Defines "medical condition" to mean a short-term or long-term physical or mental health condition as verified and documented by any licensed health care provider.
- Adds an effective date of March 1, 2015.

Hearing Date: 1/27/14

Staff: Lindsay Lanham (786-7120).

Background:

In 2008 the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act was signed into federal law. Among its many provisions, the "Fostering Connections" legislation created a pathway for states to use Title IV-E funds, or foster care funding, to extend foster care services to youth ages 19-21 if the youth engages in certain qualifying activities.

In 2011 the Legislature enacted Second Substitute House Bill 1128 (2SHB 1128), which established the Extended Foster Care program in Washington. Second Substitute House Bill 1128 specifies that youth ages 19-21 are eligible for extended foster care services if the youth is

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participating in or completing a secondary education program or a secondary education equivalency program. Extended foster care services may include, but are not limited to foster care placement or placement in a supervised independent living setting, medical or dental services, transitional living services, case management and assistance meeting basic needs.

In 2012 the Legislature passed Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2592 (ESHB 2592) which expanded eligibility for foster care eligibility to include youth who are enrolled, or have applied for and demonstrate intent to enroll in a postsecondary academic or postsecondary vocational program. In 2013 the Legislature enacted Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5405 (E2SSB 5405), which among its many provisions expanded qualifying activities to allow a youth to request extended foster care services if the youth has an open dependency case at age 18 and is participating in a program or activity designed to promote employment or remove barriers to employment.

Summary of Bill:

House Bill 2335 (HB 2335) specifies that a youth is eligible for extended foster care services if the youth engages in employment for eighty hours or more per month. Additionally, HB 2335 adds that a youth is eligible for extended foster care services if the youth is not able to engage in any established qualifying activities due to a documented medical condition. House Bill 2335 also defines "medical condition" to mean a short-term or long-term physical or mental health condition as verified and documented by any licensed health care provider regulated by a disciplining authority. House Bill 2335 concludes by adding an effective date of March 1, 2015.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on March 1, 2015.