SENATE BILL REPORT
SB 5809

As Amended by House, April 16, 2013

Title: An act relating to the home visiting services account.

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to the home visiting services account.

Sponsors: Senator Litzow.

Brief History:
Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/21/13 [DP].
Passed Senate: 2/26/13, 49-0.
Passed House: 4/16/13, 92-4.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.
Signed by Senators Litzow, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; McAuliffe, Ranking Member; Rolfes, Assistant Ranking Member; Billig, Brown, Cleveland, Fain, Hill, Mullet and Rivers.

Staff: Eric Wolf (786-7405)

Background: In 2006, the Legislature created a nongovernmental private-public partnership focused on investing in early learning. This partnership is known as Thrive by Five (Thrive).

In 2007, the Legislature directed the Council for Children and Families to develop a plan with the Department of Social and Health Services, Department of Health, and the Department of Early Learning (DEL) to coordinate or consolidate home visiting services, which were spread across multiple state agencies.

In 2010, the Home Visiting Services Account (HVSA) was created and is administered by DEL. The non-appropriated account contains a mixture of state and federal funds, which are used for home visiting activities aimed at enhancing child development and well-being, reducing the incidence of child abuse and neglect, and promoting school readiness. Revenues to HVSA consist of appropriations by the Legislature and federal grants. DEL contracts with Thrive to administer programs funded through HVSA. Thrive funds programs using a competitive bid process and convenes an advisory committee of early learning and home visiting experts to advise Thrive regarding research and distribution of funds.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Authorization for expenditures from HVSA can only be made after private matching funds are committed.

Summary of Bill: The HVSA is changed to an appropriated account. All federal funds received by DEL for home visiting must be deposited into HVSA.

DEL is designated as overseeing HVSA and is the lead agency for home visiting system development. Thrive will administer the home visiting services delivery system and provide support to funded programs. Rather than having all private matching funds committed in advance, DEL's director and Thrive will determine annually the private match rate for public funds invested in the account. Thrive may fund programs through a competitive process or a process in compliance with regulations on the funding sources. Provisions related to the transition to the use of HVSA are removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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 bill provides greater transparency about how money in the HVSA account is spent. The bill is a technical clean-up bill that clarifies the role of Thrive and its duties with respect to home visiting services delivery.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Lauren Hipp, Thrive WA; Kelli Bohanon, DEL; Laura Wells, Home Visiting Coalition.

House Amendment(s): Specifies that the intent of the Legislature is that state funds invested in HVSA be matched at 50 percent by the private-public partnership, Thrive, each fiscal year. However, state funds in the account may be accessed even in the event that Thrive fails to meet the 50 percent match rate target. If Thrive fails to meet the 50 percent match rate target, Thrive and DEL must jointly submit a report to the relevant legislative committees detailing the reasons why the match rate target was not met, the actual match rate, and a plan to achieve the 50 percent match rate target the following year.

Amounts from the account used by DEL for program administration may not exceed an average of 4 percent in any two consecutive fiscal years.