

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6068

As of January 17, 2014

Title: An act relating to the continuity and stability of child care.

Brief Description: Concerning the continuity and stability of child care.

Sponsors: Senators Billig, Litzow, Mullet, Rolfes, Hargrove, Angel, Frockt, Kohl-Welles, Ranker, McAuliffe and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/17/14.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Katherine Taylor (786-7434)

Background: Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) is a subsidy program that assists families with low incomes in paying for child care while they work or meet other participation requirements. The state pays part of the cost of child care. The family is responsible for making a copayment to the child care provider. The Department of Early Learning sets child care subsidy policy and provides WCCC oversight for child care licensing and early learning services. The Department of Social Health Services helps families apply for WCCC, determines eligibility and consumer copayments, authorizes child care, and pays providers. To be eligible for WCCC, families must: be living in Washington, have one or more children who are U.S. citizens or legal residents, meet income eligibility requirements, and work in legal, income-generating taxable activities; or meet other specific requirements. Eligible families may then choose licensed or certified child care centers, family child care homes, or license-exempt, in-home or relative providers as child care options.

Summary of Bill: A child is eligible for WCCC for a 12-month enrollment period and may not be deemed ineligible for any change in circumstances including but not limited to:

- change in family composition;
- change in a parent or caregiver's employment status;
- change in a parent or caregiver's employment status due to health, maternity or paternity leave, or other family leave condition; and
- change in a parent or caregiver's income.

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.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2014.

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: Access to high quality child care helps children prepare for education. We need to continue to remove barriers and improve access to education and child care options. We must invest in high quality early education. We need to prepare kids to learn. These bills provide a comprehensive package. The bills focus on outcomes, build in clear standards, focus on stability and continuity, and increase meaningful collaboration. We need to invest in our children. It is a moral imperative to change these kids' lives. We want Washington to be the best place to raise kids. This is a great opportunity. We need to have consistent standards. We believe solving the 12-month issue will help with continuity of care and supports parents. Parents can be penalized if they have health issues.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Lori Pittman, Puget Sound Educational Service District, Early Learning Action Alliance; Parasa Chanramy, Stand for Children; Frank Ordway, League of Education Voters.