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HOUSE BILL 2665

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State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2014 Regular Session

**By** Representatives Pettigrew, Kagi, Sawyer, Gregerson, Freeman, and Ortiz-Self; by request of Department of Social and Health Services

Read first time 01/24/14. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & Human Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to the advisory committee on the disproportionate  
2 representation of children of color in Washington's child welfare  
3 system; amending RCW 74.13.096; repealing 2009 c 520 s 96 (uncodified);  
4 and repealing 2007 c 465 s 3 (uncodified).

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

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 74.13.096 and 2009 c 520 s 63 are each amended to read  
7 as follows:

8 (1) The secretary shall convene an advisory committee to analyze  
9 and make recommendations on the disproportionate representation of  
10 children of color in Washington's child welfare system. The department  
11 shall collaborate with the Washington institute for public policy and  
12 private sector entities to develop a methodology for the advisory  
13 committee to follow in conducting a baseline analysis of data from the  
14 child welfare system to determine whether racial disproportionality and  
15 racial disparity exist in this system. The Washington institute for  
16 public policy shall serve as technical staff for the advisory  
17 committee. In determining whether racial disproportionality or racial  
18 disparity exists, the committee shall utilize existing research and

1 evaluations conducted within Washington state, nationally, and in other  
2 states and localities that have similarly analyzed the prevalence of  
3 racial disproportionality and disparity in child welfare.

4 (2) At a minimum, the advisory committee shall examine and analyze:

5 (a) The level of involvement of children of color at each stage in the  
6 state's child welfare system, including the points of entry and exit,  
7 and each point at which a treatment decision is made; (b) the number of  
8 children of color in low-income or single-parent families involved in  
9 the state's child welfare system; (c) the family structures of families  
10 involved in the state's child welfare system; and (d) the outcomes for  
11 children in the existing child welfare system. This analysis shall be  
12 disaggregated by racial and ethnic group, and by geographic region.

13 (3) The committee of not more than fifteen individuals shall  
14 consist of experts in social work, law, child welfare, psychology, or  
15 related fields, at least two tribal representatives, a representative  
16 of the governor's juvenile justice advisory committee, a representative  
17 of a community-based organization involved with child welfare issues,  
18 a representative of the department, a current or former foster care  
19 youth, a current or former foster care parent, and a parent previously  
20 involved with Washington's child welfare system. Committee members  
21 shall be selected as follows: (a) Five members selected by the senate  
22 majority leader; (b) five members selected by the speaker of the house  
23 of representatives; and (c) five members selected by the secretary of  
24 the department. The secretary, the senate majority leader, and the  
25 speaker of the house of representatives shall coordinate appointments  
26 to ensure the representation specified in this subsection is achieved.  
27 After the advisory committee appointments are finalized, the committee  
28 shall select two individuals to serve as cochairs of the committee, one  
29 of whom shall be a representative from a nongovernmental entity. The  
30 advisory committee shall develop membership rules by August 1, 2014.  
31 The membership rules must be included in the annual secretary's report  
32 required under subsection (6) of this section.

33 (4) The secretary shall make reasonable efforts to seek public and  
34 private funding for the advisory committee.

35 (5) Not later than June 1, 2008, the advisory committee created in  
36 subsection (1) of this section shall report to the secretary of the  
37 department on the results of the analysis. If the results of the  
38 analysis indicate disproportionality or disparity exists for any racial

1 or ethnic group in any region of the state, the committee, in  
2 conjunction with the secretary of the department, shall develop a plan  
3 for remedying the disproportionality or disparity. The remediation  
4 plan shall include: (a) Recommendations for administrative and  
5 legislative actions related to appropriate programs and services to  
6 reduce and eliminate disparities in the system and improve the long-  
7 term outcomes for children of color who are served by the system; and  
8 (b) performance measures for implementing the remediation plan. To the  
9 extent possible and appropriate, the remediation plan shall be  
10 developed to integrate the recommendations required in this subsection  
11 with the department's existing compliance plans, training efforts, and  
12 other practice improvement and reform initiatives in progress. The  
13 advisory committee shall be responsible for ongoing evaluation of  
14 current and prospective policies and procedures for their contribution  
15 to or effect on racial disproportionality and disparity.

16 (6) Not later than December 1, 2008, the secretary shall report the  
17 results of the analysis conducted under subsection (2) of this section  
18 and shall describe the remediation plan required under subsection (5)  
19 of this section to the appropriate committees of the legislature with  
20 jurisdiction over policy and fiscal matters relating to children,  
21 families, and human services. Beginning January 1, 2010, the secretary  
22 shall report annually to the appropriate committees of the legislature  
23 on the implementation of the remediation plan, including any measurable  
24 progress made in reducing and eliminating racial disproportionality and  
25 disparity in the state's child welfare system.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The following acts or parts of acts are each  
27 repealed:

- 28 (1) 2009 c 520 s 96 (uncodified); and  
29 (2) 2007 c 465 s 3 (uncodified).

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