

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2767

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Human Services, Mental Health & Housing, February 25, 2016

Title: An act relating to defining and using the term center-based services for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Brief Description: Defining and using the term center-based services for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Sponsors: House Committee on Early Learning & Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Walsh, Kagi, Kilduff, Schmick and Dye).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/16/16, 97-1.

Committee Activity: Human Services, Mental Health & Housing: 2/23/16, 2/25/16 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, MENTAL HEALTH & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators O'Ban, Chair; Miloscia, Vice Chair; Darneille, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove and Padden.

Staff: Kevin Black (786-7747)

Background: The Developmental Disabilities Administration is an administration of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) which provides services to eligible persons directly and through contracted providers relating to developmental disabilities. These services may include employment services, including prevocational services, which are defined by rule as services typically occurring in a specialized or segregated setting which include individualized monthly employment related activities in the community. Nonprofit organizations which provide such services are referred to in code as sheltered workshops.

Summary of Bill: The term "center-based services" is defined to mean job-training, skill development, and community employment services provided by a qualified organization for individuals with significant disabilities. Services may be provided at a facility or at an integrated community site engaged in business work activities whose primary purpose is to provide gainful employment training and preparatory training services to individuals with disabilities who are not prepared for competitive employment, or during times when

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employment opportunities for the person do not exist. Services may include skill evaluation, job training, and other employment-related services.

DSHS must adopt rules and revise existing rules to incorporate the term "center-based services" to describe services of the nature described in this definition.

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: I understand that because of CMS guidelines, and the interpretation of them made by this state, we have taken the term, "sheltered workshop," and made it sound like a bad thing. I don't think it's isolated and discriminating. We can do more to help some folks integrate, but these facilities are doing good work to help clients gain work experience and prepare for community employment. The term in the bill more accurately reflects the services which are available. The term "sheltered workshop" is antiquated and needs to be upgraded. Center-based services is more descriptive of the services allowable under CMS regulations. This bill changes wording, but words matter tremendously. DDA is on record as trying to eliminate all center-based employment by 2017. Center-based employment is not just segregated, it is a way to build skills. For some people it's what they want and what they need. The Legislature needs to guide DDA to preserve these services. The unemployment rate among persons with developmental disabilities is 80 percent. Most of my patients are sitting at home with a television and essentially no activities. This bill is a first step to creating a system to serve people one at a time in the way they need to be served. There are almost no activities available for families of modest means. "Community Rehabilitation Program" is a better term than "sheltered workshop." We have eight people who have been working in our shop since 1991. This is one of the rungs on the ladder to gainful employment success.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Walsh, Prime Sponsor; Scott Rapp, Tahoma Associates; Scott Shinsato, Coalition of Developmental Disabilities Voices; Alan Gill, citizen.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.