

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6431

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As of February 4, 2016

**Title:** An act relating to maternity and paternity leave for K-12 teachers.

**Brief Description:** Requiring a study of costs associated with maternity and paternity leave for K-12 teachers.

**Sponsors:** Senators Mullet, Litzow, Billig and Fain.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/02/16.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Alia Kennedy (786-7405)

**Background:** Washington does not currently have a paid maternity or paternity leave program for public employees. However, federal and state laws provide that certain employees, including certificated classroom teachers, are entitled to unpaid family and medical leave.

Under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), eligible employees are entitled to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12 month period for specified family and medical reasons, and to be reinstated to their original job or an equivalent job upon their return. Leave may be taken for a variety of reasons, including the birth and care of a child of the employee, the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care, the care of an immediate family member who has a serious health condition, or the serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to work.

Washington's Family Leave Act provides that eligible employees are entitled to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for specified reasons, including pregnancy or adoption of a child. Certain employees are also entitled to leave for sickness or temporary disability related to pregnancy or childbirth, in addition to leave under federal law.

**Summary of Bill:** The Joint Legislative and Audit Review Committee (JLARC) must conduct an analysis on the costs and impacts associated with implementing and maintaining a state funded maternity and paternity leave program for K-12 certificated classroom teachers. With assistance from the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, the analysis must also

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*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.*

include the impact of maternity and paternity leave on increasing teacher recruitment and retention.

A report of findings must be submitted to the Legislature by January 1, 2017.

**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: Paid family leave has the potential to attract out-of-state teachers to jobs in Washington, and give existing teachers an incentive to stay in the teaching profession. It is targeted compensation that would address the teacher shortage and retention problems. The study created under this bill would review how an aggressive maternity leave policy would look in Washington and how it would compare to other states. The study may also help structure future policy in this area.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Mullet, prime sponsor.

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