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ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2518

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State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By House Early Learning & Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Sawyer, Walsh, Kagi, Kilduff, Zeiger, Reykdal, Frame, McBride, Ormsby, Walkinshaw, Gregerson, Bergquist, and Stanford)

READ FIRST TIME 02/03/16.

1 AN ACT Relating to reducing intergenerational poverty; and adding  
2 a new chapter to Title 74 RCW.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that  
5 intergenerational poverty, which passes from parents to children,  
6 should be distinguished from situational poverty, which occurs after  
7 an event like losing employment. Intergenerational poverty can affect  
8 the lives of many future children and generations without the  
9 development of specific strategies to stop this cycle.

10 (2) The legislature finds that it is necessary to bring together  
11 state agencies and other stakeholders to collect data regarding  
12 intergenerational poverty and develop two generation-specific  
13 strategies to provide families the support they need to overcome a  
14 history of poverty.

15 (3) The legislature intends to create a data system that allows  
16 for meaningful analysis of intergenerational poverty for the purposes  
17 of policy and program development. The legislature further intends to  
18 create an intergenerational poverty reduction commission and an  
19 intergenerational poverty advisory committee and require the  
20 commission to provide an annual report in order to lay the groundwork  
21 in Washington for reducing intergenerational poverty.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    The definitions in this section apply  
2 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires  
3 otherwise.

4        (1) "Commission" means the commission on intergenerational  
5 poverty reduction.

6        (2) "Cycle of poverty" or "poverty cycle" means the set of  
7 factors or events by which the long-term poverty of a person is  
8 likely to continue and be experienced by each child of the person  
9 when the child becomes an adult unless there is outside intervention.

10       (3) "Intergenerational poverty" means poverty in which two or  
11 more successive generations of a family continue in the cycle of  
12 poverty and governmental dependence, and is not situational poverty.

13       NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**    (1) The department shall establish and  
14 maintain a system to track intergenerational poverty, which must:

15        (a) Identify groups that have a high risk of experiencing  
16 intergenerational poverty;

17        (b) Identify incidents, patterns, and trends that explain or  
18 contribute to intergenerational poverty;

19        (c) Assist case workers, social scientists, and government  
20 officials in the study and development of effective and efficient  
21 plans and programs to help individuals and families in the state to  
22 break the cycle of poverty; and

23        (d) Gather and track available local, state, and national data  
24 on:

25            (i) Official poverty rates;

26            (ii) Child poverty rates;

27            (iii) Years spent by individuals in childhood poverty;

28            (iv) Years spent by individuals in adult poverty; and

29        (v) Information on the impact of poverty and economic hardship on  
30 other areas of child and family well-being, including but not limited  
31 to early learning, K-12 education, higher education, health, criminal  
32 justice, child welfare, and employment.

33        (2) To the extent available, data collected pursuant to this  
34 section must be broken down by:

35            (a) Detailed racial ethnic groups and subgroups;

36            (b) Nativity;

37            (c) Age;

38            (d) Sex and gender; and

1 (e) Local geographies, including urban, suburban, rural, and  
2 census tract.

3 (3) In implementing the intergenerational poverty tracking  
4 system, the department shall:

5 (a) Use available data in the tracking system, including public  
6 assistance data, census data, and other data made available to the  
7 department;

8 (b) Develop and implement methods to integrate, compare, analyze,  
9 and validate the data for the purposes described in subsection (1) of  
10 this section;

11 (c) Protect the privacy of individuals living in poverty by using  
12 and distributing data within the tracking system in compliance with  
13 RCW 74.04.060, and other applicable state and federal laws;

14 (d) Include in the annual written report described in section 8  
15 of this act, a report on the data, findings, and potential uses of  
16 the tracking system.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** There is created the Washington  
18 intergenerational poverty reduction commission composed of the  
19 following voting members:

20 (1) The secretary of the department or his or her designee;

21 (2) The secretary of health or his or her designee;

22 (3) The superintendent of public instruction or his or her  
23 designee;

24 (4) The executive director of the state board for community and  
25 technical colleges or his or her designee;

26 (5) The commissioner of the employment security department or his  
27 or her designee;

28 (6) The director of the department of commerce or his or her  
29 designee;

30 (7) The director of the department of early learning or his or  
31 her designee; and

32 (8) The chair of the intergenerational poverty advisory committee  
33 created in section 7 of this act.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The commission shall be cochaired by  
35 the secretary of the department or his or her designee and the chair  
36 of the intergenerational poverty advisory committee or his or her  
37 designee.

38 (2) The cochairs:

1 (a) Are responsible for the call and conduct of meetings;

2 (b) Shall call and hold meetings of the commission at least  
3 quarterly; and

4 (c) Shall call additional meetings upon request by a majority of  
5 the commission's voting members.

6 (3) A majority of the voting members of the commission  
7 constitutes a quorum of the commission at any meeting and the action  
8 of the majority of voting members present is the action of the  
9 commission.

10 (4) The department shall provide staff support to the commission.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) The commission's purpose is to:

12 (a) Collaborate in sharing and analyzing data and information  
13 regarding intergenerational poverty in the state with a primary focus  
14 on data and information regarding children who are at risk of  
15 continuing the cycle of poverty and welfare dependency unless outside  
16 intervention is made;

17 (b) Examine and analyze shared data and information regarding  
18 intergenerational poverty, including the data provided by the  
19 intergenerational poverty report described in section 8 of this act,  
20 to identify and develop effective and efficient plans, programs, and  
21 recommendations to help at-risk children in the state escape the  
22 cycle of poverty and welfare dependency;

23 (c) Implement data-driven policies and programs addressing  
24 poverty, public assistance, education, and other areas as needed to  
25 measurably reduce the incidence of children in the state who remain  
26 in the cycle of poverty and welfare dependency as they become adults;

27 (d) Establish and facilitate improved cooperation between state  
28 agencies down to the case worker level in rescuing children from  
29 intergenerational poverty and welfare dependency; and

30 (e) Collaborate with the intergenerational poverty advisory  
31 committee established in section 7 of this act and other community  
32 resources, including academic experts, advocacy groups, nonprofit  
33 corporations, local governments, and religious institutions in  
34 exploring strategies and solutions to help children in the state who  
35 are victims of intergenerational poverty escape the cycle of poverty  
36 and welfare dependency.

37 (2) The commission shall:

38 (a) Fulfill the commission's purposes as listed in subsection (1)  
39 of this section;

1 (b) Study, evaluate, and report on the status and effectiveness  
2 of policies, procedures, and programs that provide services to  
3 children in the state affected by intergenerational poverty and  
4 welfare dependency;

5 (c) Study and evaluate the policies, procedures, and programs  
6 implemented by other states and nongovernmental entities that address  
7 the needs of children affected by intergenerational poverty and  
8 welfare dependency;

9 (d)(i) Identify policies, procedures, and programs, including any  
10 lack of interagency data sharing, lack of policy coordination, or  
11 current federal requirements, that are impeding efforts to help  
12 children in the state affected by intergenerational poverty escape  
13 the poverty cycle and welfare dependency; and

14 (ii) Implement and recommend changes to those policies and  
15 procedures;

16 (e) Create an ongoing five and ten-year plan, which is updated  
17 annually, containing:

18 (i) Measurable goals and benchmarks, including future action  
19 needed to attain those goals and benchmarks, for decreasing the  
20 incidence of intergenerational poverty among the state's children and  
21 increasing the number of the state's children who escape the poverty  
22 cycle and welfare dependency;

23 (ii) Implement policy, procedure, and program changes to address  
24 the needs of children affected by intergenerational poverty and help  
25 those children escape the poverty cycle and welfare dependency,  
26 including, as available over time, data to track the effectiveness of  
27 each change; and

28 (iii) Recommend policy, procedure, and program changes to address  
29 the needs of children affected by intergenerational poverty and to  
30 help those children escape the poverty cycle and welfare dependency,  
31 including the steps that will be required to make the recommended  
32 changes and whether further action is required by the legislature or  
33 the federal government;

34 (f) Ensure that each change and recommended change to a policy,  
35 procedure, or program, which is made by the commission, is supported  
36 by verifiable data;

37 (g) Protect the privacy of individuals living in poverty by using  
38 and distributing the data it collects or examines in compliance with  
39 RCW 74.04.060 and other applicable federal and state requirements;  
40 and

1 (h) Provide a forum for public comment and participation in  
2 efforts to help children in the state escape the cycle of poverty and  
3 welfare dependency.

4 (3) To accomplish its duties, the commission may:

5 (a) Request and receive from any state or local governmental  
6 agency or institution, information relating to poverty in the state,  
7 including:

8 (i) Reports;

9 (ii) Audits;

10 (iii) Data;

11 (iv) Projections; and

12 (v) Statistics; and

13 (b) Appoint special committees, in addition to the advisory  
14 committee described in section 7 of this act, to advise and assist  
15 the commission.

16 (4)(a) Members of a special committee described in subsection  
17 (3)(b) of this section shall be appointed by the commission and may  
18 include:

19 (i) Members of the commission; or

20 (ii) Individuals from the private or public sector.

21 (b) Nonlegislative members are not entitled to be reimbursed for  
22 travel expenses if they are elected officials or are participating on  
23 behalf of an employer, governmental entity, or other organization.  
24 Any reimbursement for other nonlegislative members is subject to  
25 chapter 43.03 RCW.

26 (c) A special committee described in subsection (3)(b) of this  
27 section shall report to the commission on the progress of the special  
28 committee.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** (1) To assist the commission, there is  
30 created the intergenerational poverty advisory committee.

31 (2) The advisory committee shall include diverse, statewide  
32 representation from public, nonprofit, and for-profit entities. Its  
33 membership shall reflect regional, racial, and cultural diversity to  
34 adequately represent the needs of all children and families in the  
35 state.

36 (3) Members of the advisory committee shall be appointed by the  
37 secretary of the department, with the approval of the commission.

38 (4) The advisory committee shall consist of not more than fifteen  
39 members and shall include representatives from:

1 (a) Advocacy groups that focus on childhood poverty issues;  
2 (b) Advocacy groups that focus on education issues;  
3 (c) Academic experts in childhood poverty or education issues;  
4 (d) Faith-based organizations that address childhood poverty or  
5 education issues;  
6 (e) Tribal governments;  
7 (f) Families impacted by poverty;  
8 (g) Local government representatives that address childhood  
9 poverty or education issues; and  
10 (h) The commission on African-American affairs, the state  
11 commission on Hispanic affairs, the state commission on Asian Pacific  
12 American affairs, and the governor's office of Indian affairs.

13 (5) Subject to subsection (6) of this section, each member of the  
14 advisory committee shall be appointed for a four-year term unless a  
15 member is appointed to complete an unexpired term.

16 (6) The secretary of the department may adjust the length of term  
17 at the time of appointment or reappointment so that approximately  
18 half of the advisory committee is appointed every two years.

19 (7) The secretary of the department may remove an advisory  
20 committee member:

21 (a) If the member is unable or unwilling to carry out the  
22 member's assigned responsibilities; or  
23 (b) For good cause.

24 (8) If a vacancy occurs in the advisory committee membership for  
25 any reason, a replacement may be appointed for the unexpired term.

26 (9) The advisory committee shall choose its chair from among its  
27 membership. The secretary of the department shall convene the initial  
28 meeting of the advisory committee.

29 (10) A majority of the advisory committee constitutes a quorum of  
30 the advisory committee at any meeting and the action of the majority  
31 of members present is the action of the advisory committee.

32 (11) The advisory committee shall:

33 (a) Meet at least twice a year at the request of the commission  
34 chair or the chair of the advisory committee;

35 (b) Make recommendations to the commission on how the commission  
36 and the state can effectively address the needs of children affected  
37 by intergenerational poverty and achieve the purposes and duties of  
38 the commission as described in section 6 of this act; and

39 (c) Ensure that the advisory committee's recommendations to the  
40 commission are supported by verifiable data.

1 (12) The department shall provide staff support to the advisory  
2 committee.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** (1) Beginning October 15, 2017, and each  
4 October 15th thereafter, the commission, in collaboration with the  
5 department and the advisory committee, shall provide an annual report  
6 to the governor, the appropriate committees of the legislature, and  
7 the WorkFirst legislative executive task force.

8 (2) The report must:

9 (a) Include the five and ten-year plans described in section  
10 6(2)(e) of this act;

11 (b) Describe how the commission fulfilled its statutory purposes  
12 and duties during the year;

13 (c) Describe policies, procedures, and programs that have been  
14 implemented or modified to help break the cycle of poverty and end  
15 welfare dependency for children in the state affected by  
16 intergenerational poverty; and

17 (d) Contain recommendations on how the state should act to  
18 address issues relating to breaking the cycle of poverty and ending  
19 welfare dependency for children in the state affected by  
20 intergenerational poverty.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** Sections 1 through 8 of this act  
22 constitute a new chapter in Title 74 RCW.

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