

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2014

As Reported by House Committee On:
Early Learning & Human Services

Title: An act relating to collecting data on hunger in Washington state.

Brief Description: Collecting data on hunger in Washington state.

Sponsors: Representatives Macri, DeBolt, Pellicciotti, Kilduff, Robinson, Hudgins, Stonier, Sawyer, Jinkins, Lovick, Ortiz-Self, Tarleton, Young, McBride, Ormsby, Stanford, Doglio, Slatter, Santos and Fey.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Early Learning & Human Services: 2/15/17, 2/17/17 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Department of Health (DOH) to collect information on food insecurity beginning in 2018 as part of the annual Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey (BRFSS) to produce county- and state-level data every two years.
- Directs the DOH to collect information from state agencies on ongoing United States Department of Agriculture-funded nutrition assistance programs and report annually on program eligibility, participation, and funding beginning in 2020.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Senn, Vice Chair; McDonald, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Frame, Goodman, Kilduff, Lovick, Muri and Ortiz-Self.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Dent, Ranking Minority Member; Klippert.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Griffey and McCaslin.

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.

Staff: Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

Background:

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey.

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey (BRFSS) is a system of health-related telephone surveys funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The BRFSS collects state health data, including data relating to risk behaviors, chronic health conditions, and the use of preventative services. States may add their own questions to the BRFSS for state research purposes, and the BRFSS in Washington is overseen by the Department of Health (DOH). Individual participation in the BRFSS is completely voluntary.

United States Department of Agriculture Food Distribution and Nutrition Programs.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) oversees a variety of state-administered food distribution and nutrition programs. Examples of such programs include: the Commodity Supplemental Food Program; the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; the Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program; the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program; and the Summer Food Service Program. The USDA food and nutrition programs are administered in Washington by several state agencies, including the departments of Agriculture, Health, and Social and Health Services, as well as the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

The USDA publishes survey tools to measure food security. The USDA's two-question food insecurity screen consists of the following questions:

1. "Within the past 12 months, we worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more;" and
2. "Within the past 12 months, the food we bought just didn't last and we didn't have enough money to get more."

Affirmative responses to these questions of either "often true" or "sometimes true" may indicate a risk of household food insecurity.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey.

Beginning in 2018 the DOH must add the USDA's two-question food insecurity screen to the BRFSS annually. The DOH must gather an adequate number of responses to the screen to create a sample size adequate to produce county-level data every two years while complying with DOH and CDC guidelines for protecting respondent privacy in survey data. County data for the least populous counties may be produced as is feasible. The DOH must produce state-level data every two years and disaggregate respondents by race, ethnicity, and other subgroups to the extent possible based on existing data sets available to the DOH and other state agencies, including the OSPI.

United States Department of Agriculture Food Distribution and Nutrition Programs.

Beginning in 2020 the DOH must provide an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature on ongoing USDA-funded nutrition assistance programs administered by state agencies. At a minimum, the report must include information on:

- the number of people in Washington eligible for the programs;
- the number of people in Washington who participated in the programs;
- the average annual participation rate in the programs;
- participation rates by geographic distribution; and
- the annual federal funding of the programs in Washington.

By January 1, 2020, the DOH must develop additional criteria for the report in consultation with advocacy groups, experts, community-based organizations, tribal governments, and families impacted by poverty. Additional report criteria must include but not be limited to:

- performance benchmarks for programs, with a focus on existing benchmarks;
- geography;
- socioeconomic characteristics of households; and
- degree of disaggregation of racial and ethnic groups.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill: (1) increases the frequency that the DOH must include the USDA food insecurity screen questions in the BRFSS from every two years to annually; (2) reduces the frequency of the DOH producing county-level data from annually to every two years; (3) requires the DOH to disaggregate state-level data by race and ethnicity every two years; (4) requires respondent data to be disaggregated by other subgroups to the extent possible based on existing data sets available to the DOH and other state agencies, including the OSPI; (5) allows county-level data to be produced for the least populous counties as is feasible; (6) changes the date of the first annual report produced by the DOH on state agency administered ongoing USDA-funded nutrition assistance programs from the year 2018 to 2020; (7) extends the date by which the DOH must consult with stakeholders and experts on additional report criteria from January 1, 2018, to January 1, 2020; and (8) removes the annual report on state-agency compliance with providing data to the DOH on USDA-funded nutrition assistance programs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 17, 2017.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) One in seven Washingtonians is food insecure but we don't know where in the state this is occurring. The USDA-funded food programs are spread across several state agencies. Getting more specific race and ethnicity data will help determine who, at the local level, is experiencing food insecurity and where scarce resources can be used strategically to

better target deep pockets of need within the state. Having agencies collaborate on information sharing and data will help agencies make better programmatic decisions.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Claire Lane, Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition; and Trevor Sandison, Northwest Harvest.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.