

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2670

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

**Title:** An act relating to providing services and supports to pregnant and parenting minors to improve educational attainment.

**Brief Description:** Providing services and supports to pregnant and parenting minors to improve educational attainment.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kilduff, Muri, Stonier, Stambaugh, Sawyer, Kagi, Sells, Reeves, Ormsby, Jinkins, Santos, Bergquist, Doglio, McBride, Ortiz-Self, Stanford and Pollet.

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

Early Learning & Human Services: 1/26/18, 1/31/18 [DPS].

#### **Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Allows a minor who is pregnant or a parent to receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits regardless of income or resources.
- Requires authorization for full-day Working Connections Child Care during the school year for a minor parent meeting income and education requirements.
- Requires school districts to provide transportation for parenting students who are transporting an infant.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & HUMAN SERVICES

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Senn, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; Eslick, Frame, Goodman, Griffey, Lovick, Muri and Ortiz-Self.

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

**Staff:** Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

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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.*

## **Background:**

### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a federal block grant that provides temporary cash assistance, subsidized childcare, and work programs for low-income families.

In order to receive TANF benefits, a minor who is pregnant or a parent, and who has not been emancipated by a court, must meet program eligibility requirements including:

- making satisfactory progress in a training program leading to a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate, unless the minor has an infant less than 12 weeks old living in the home;
- living in a situation approved by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS); and
- having a protective payee set up by the DSHS. A protective payee is a person who manages the client's cash benefits to provide for basic needs. The protective payee may be a DSHS employee or another person selected by the DSHS.

If a minor parent lives with a parent or guardian, the income of the parent or guardian is counted when determining the minor's eligibility. If a minor is applying for benefits separately for themselves and their child, only a portion of the parent or guardian's income is considered when determining financial eligibility.

If a minor does not meet the eligibility requirements, the minor's child may still be eligible for a child-only TANF grant if the household meets all other eligibility criteria.

### Working Connections Child Care.

The Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program is a subsidized child care program administered by the Department of Early Learning and the DSHS. To receive authorizations for 12 months of child care subsidy, eligible families must have household incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Depending on income and household size, the consumer may be required to pay a copayment to their child care provider. A consumer pays the minimum copayment when he or she is a minor parent and is either a TANF recipient or part of his or her parent or relative's TANF assistance unit. The minimum copayment is \$15 per month.

The DSHS must prioritize certain groups for WCCC program services. Included as priority groups are families applying for or receiving TANF, and minor parents who are full-time students attending high school where there is a school-sponsored, on-site child care center and the minor parent is not living with a parent or guardian.

Both parents, if living in the household, must be working or participating in a DSHS-approved activity. For a minor, approved activities may include satisfactory attendance at a high school or a high school equivalency program. Eligible consumers who participate in 110 hours or more of approved activities per month are authorized for full-day or half-day child care, depending upon the age of the child in care. A nonschool age child is eligible for full-time care.

### School District Transportation.

School districts may provide for the transportation of school children and school employees using school buses and drivers hired by the district, commercially chartered bus services, or through a pupil transportation services contract with a private nongovernmental entity. School districts may, when approved by the superintendent of the educational service district, approve payment for individual transportation arrangements for an eligible student.

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) adopted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration regulate motor vehicle restraint systems for children as well as safety requirements for school buses. The FMVSS require small school buses and school-chartered buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 10,000 pounds or less to have lap/shoulder seat belt assemblies. For large school busses with a GVWR of more than 10,000 pounds, seat belts are not required under federal rules.

State law requires children under the age of 8 be restrained in a child passenger restraint system meeting the FMVSS when being transported in a motor vehicle that is required to be equipped with passenger seat belts. This requirement does not apply to school buses.

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### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

#### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

Starting May 1, 2019, a minor who is pregnant or a parent may receive TANF benefits regardless of the applicant's income or available resources. The minor must be actively progressing toward meeting education requirements. If the minor lives with a parent or guardian who is not receiving TANF benefits, the income and resources of the parent or guardian of the minor may not be considered when determining eligibility. If the minor lives with his or her child's natural or adoptive parent or stepparent, the income and resources of the other parent may not be considered when determining eligibility.

#### Working Connections Child Care.

Starting May 1, 2019, within existing resources, the DSHS must authorize full-day WCCC during the school year for a minor parent who is attending high school or working toward completing a GED. The minor must participate in the approved activity for 110 hours each month and have a household income that does not exceed 85 percent of the State Median Income (SMI). When determining eligibility, the DSHS may not consider availability of the other parent to provide care. The DSHS may not require the minor parent to pay a copayment greater than the minimum established in rule for the program.

#### School District Transportation.

By July 1, 2020, at the request of an eligible student, a school district may allow the student to transport an infant on a school bus or other district transportation. The infant must be transported in a rear-facing child restraint system.

If the district denies a student request to transport the infant by bus, the district must authorize other arrangements for the student's transportation. The term "eligible student" includes students served by the transportation program of a school district or compensated

for individual transportation arrangements whose route stop is outside the walk area for a student's school.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill:

- excludes the income and resources of the other parent when determining eligibility for TANF in cases where a minor parent is living with their child's natural or adoptive parent or stepparent;
- adds an income limit of 85 percent of the SMI when determining eligibility for the WCCC program for a minor parent;
- replaces language excluding the employment status of the minor and other biological parent from WCCC eligibility determinations with language excluding the availability of the other biological parent to provide care;
- removes the provision creating an assistance unit for minor parents at the DSHS;
- removes provisions relating to Graduation, Reality, and Dual-Role Skills (GRADS) program grants; and
- adds an effective date of May 1, 2019, for provisions relating to TANF and WCCC eligibility.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on February 1, 2018.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** This bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for section 2 relating to TANF eligibility, and section 3 relating to WCCC eligibility, which take effect May 1, 2019.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This is an intergenerational poverty strategy. It is difficult for a young parent who is raising a child to achieve a high school diploma, enter the work force, and be a productive member of society. The GRADS program supports these students. The Washington State Institution for Public Policy (WSIPP) has already conducted a cost-benefit analysis of GRADS and shown a \$3 to \$1 benefit for these students. This breaks down barriers to childcare, helps teens attending school and raising a child to get TANF benefits, and ensures a coordination of services within the DSHS for these young people. The deck is stacked against young people who are raising kids. This will give them the support they need and ensure they do not spend a life in poverty. This state has between 5,000 and 7,000 pregnant and parenting teen moms. According to the 2016 GRADS Outcome Evaluation and Benefit-Cost Analysis, GRADS students have better educational outcomes. There's a huge barrier with teen parents being set back by the income of their parents or their living situation. Being able to have easy access to the WCCC and transportation would be very helpful. This is a rare opportunity to intervene at a crossroads moment to keep people from a path of poverty. This will help mothers by supporting education and will help children by

providing high quality early learning. The fiscal note might be a little high, but intervening early will bring benefits as shown by the WSIPP study.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Kilduff, prime sponsor; Denise Mileson, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction; Keelee Frost, Aberdeen School District; Lupe Vasquez, Quinault Indian Nation; Paige White; Michelle Spenser, Seattle Public School District; Gabriela Martinez; and Melanie Smith, Wellspring Family Services.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.