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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5485**

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**State of Washington                      65th Legislature                      2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Human Services, Mental Health & Housing (originally sponsored by Senators Billig, Miloscia, Keiser, and Darneille)

READ FIRST TIME 02/16/17.

1            AN ACT Relating to collecting data on hunger in Washington state;  
2 adding a new section to chapter 43.70 RCW; and creating a new  
3 section.

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

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.**    INTENT. The legislature recognizes that  
6 hunger and food insecurity affect a significant number of families  
7 and single adults in Washington. The legislature recognizes that data  
8 on the extent of food insecurity and the reach of key nutrition  
9 programs is currently inadequate and will be improved through use of  
10 existing survey platforms and data collection by key state agencies.  
11 The legislature intends to establish that it is the responsibility of  
12 the department of health to conduct research on food insecurity in  
13 Washington.

14            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    A new section is added to chapter 43.70  
15 RCW to read as follows:

16            (1)(a) Beginning in 2018 and every year thereafter, the  
17 department shall add the United States department of agriculture two-  
18 question food insecurity screen to the behavioral risk factor  
19 surveillance system survey.

1 (b) The department shall gather a sufficient number of responses  
2 to the two food insecurity survey questions to gather a sample size  
3 as needed to produce county level data every even-numbered year, and  
4 as feasible in the least populous counties while complying with  
5 department and centers for disease control and prevention guidelines  
6 for protecting respondent privacy in survey data.

7 (c) The department shall gather a sufficient number of responses  
8 to the two food insecurity survey questions to disaggregate  
9 respondents by race and ethnicity of the participants, expanding the  
10 sample size as needed to produce state level data every even-numbered  
11 year while complying with department and centers for disease control  
12 and prevention guidelines for protecting respondent privacy in survey  
13 data.

14 (2)(a) Beginning in 2020 and annually thereafter, the department  
15 shall produce a report on ongoing United States department of  
16 agriculture funded nutrition assistance programs in Washington state.

17 (b) The report must include information from state agencies that  
18 administer an ongoing United States department of agriculture funded  
19 nutrition assistance program, including the department of social and  
20 health services, the department of health, the office of the  
21 superintendent of public instruction, and the Washington state  
22 department of agriculture. The information collected must include,  
23 but is not limited to, the following:

24 (i) The number of people in Washington who are eligible for the  
25 program;

26 (ii) The number of people in Washington who participated in the  
27 program;

28 (iii) The average annual participation rate in the program;

29 (iv) Participation rates by geographic distribution;

30 (v) The annual federal funding of the program in Washington; and

31 (vi) Other criteria as required by (c) of this subsection.

32 (c) By January 1, 2020, the department, in consultation with  
33 advocacy groups and experts that focus on hunger and poverty issues,  
34 academic experts in poverty and nutrition issues, advocacy groups and  
35 experts in race issues, community-based organizations that administer  
36 federal nutrition programs, tribal governments, and families impacted  
37 by poverty, shall develop additional criteria including, but not  
38 limited to:

39 (i) Performance benchmarks for programs in Washington state, with  
40 a focus on existing benchmarks;

1 (ii) Geography;  
2 (iii) Socioeconomic characteristics of households; and  
3 (iv) Degree of disaggregation of racial and ethnic groups.  
4 (d) The department shall provide the report to the appropriate  
5 committees of the legislature and to the governor by December 31,  
6 2020, and annually thereafter.

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