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**SENATE BILL 5485**

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**State of Washington**

**65th Legislature**

**2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Billig, Miloscia, Keiser, and Darneille

Read first time 01/26/17. Referred to Committee on Human Services,  
Mental Health & Housing.

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 even-numbered year thereafter,  
17 the department shall add the United States department of agriculture  
18 two-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 disaggregate  
3 respondents by race and ethnicity of the participants, expanding the  
4 sample size as needed to produce county and state level data.

5 (2)(a) Beginning in 2018 and annually thereafter, the department  
6 shall produce a report on ongoing United States department of  
7 agriculture funded nutrition assistance programs in Washington state.

8 (b) The report must include information from every state agency  
9 that administers an ongoing United States department of agriculture  
10 funded nutrition assistance program, including the department of  
11 social and health services, the department of health, the office of  
12 the superintendent of public instruction, and the Washington state  
13 department of agriculture. The information collected must include,  
14 but is not limited to, the following:

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

17 (ii) The number of people in Washington who participated in the  
18 program;

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

20 (iv) Participation rates by geographic distribution;

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

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

23 (c) By January 1, 2018, the department, in consultation with  
24 advocacy groups and experts that focus on hunger and poverty issues,  
25 academic experts in poverty and nutrition issues, advocacy groups and  
26 experts in race issues, community-based organizations that administer  
27 federal nutrition programs, tribal governments, and families impacted  
28 by poverty, shall develop additional criteria including, but not  
29 limited to:

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

32 (ii) Geography;

33 (iii) Socioeconomic characteristics of households; and

34 (iv) Degree of disaggregation of racial and ethnic groups.

35 (d) The department shall provide a report on compliance with (b)  
36 of this subsection to the appropriate committees of the legislature  
37 and to the governor by December 31, 2018, and annually thereafter.

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