

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6475

As of January 30, 2020

Title: An act relating to establishing the identification assistance and support pilot program to assist individuals experiencing homelessness with locating the documentation necessary to qualify for certain forms of identification.

Brief Description: Assisting homeless individuals with obtaining identification.

Sponsors: Senators Hasegawa, Saldaña and Wilson, C.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 1/29/20.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates an identification assistance and support pilot program at the Department of Commerce (Commerce).
- Directs the program to assist in the collection of documentation and the procurement of valid identification for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Requires the Commerce to evaluate the program and report to the Legislature and Governor by November 1, 2021.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Corban Nemeth (786-7736)

Background: Identification. The Washington State Department of Licensing (DOL) issues driver's licenses, endorsements, and identicards that are valid for up to six years. An identicard is a Washington identification card issued by DOL.

DOL must issue an identicard, containing a picture, to any applicant provided the applicant:

- does not hold a valid Washington driver's license;
- proves the applicant's identity; and
- pays the required statutory \$54 fee unless the applicant receives public assistance, in which case the cost is equal to the actual cost to produce the identicard.

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.

Proof of Identity. To meet the proof of identity requirement when applying for an identicard, an applicant must display or provide DOL with at least one of the following pieces of valid identifying documentation that contains the signature and photograph of the applicant:

- a valid or recently expired driver's license or instruction permit;
- a Washington State identicard or an identification card issued by another state;
- an identification card issued by the United States, a state, or an agency of either the United States or a state;
- a military identification card;
- a United States passport; or
- an Immigration and Naturalization Service form.

An applicant who is unable to present the identifying documentation listed above may ask that other identifying documentation be considered by DOL. DOL may waive the requirement for a piece of valid identifying documentation listed above if the applicant presents sufficient valid supporting documents found by DOL to clearly establish the identity of the applicant.

Commerce Homelessness Programs. Commerce administers a variety of homelessness and housing support programs, including Housing and Essential Needs and the Consolidated Homeless Grant.

The 2014 supplemental operating budget directed Commerce to establish a pilot program to provide a certification of homeless status for persons who may need a physical or mailing address for purposes of employment. Commerce contracted with a nonprofit to provide this service. The study recommended providing in-person assistance with obtaining identification.

Summary of Bill: Subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this purpose, Commerce must contract for or create an identification assistance and support pilot program to assist in the collection of documentation and the procurement of valid identification for persons experiencing homelessness. The pilot program must operate in one western Washington county with a population of 1 million or more and one eastern Washington county with a population of 500,000 or more. Commerce must evaluate the program based on persons served, identifications obtained, and outcomes including rates of employment and housing status. Commerce must provide reports annually to the Legislature and the Governor beginning November 2, 2021.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Hard work was an important component of lifting myself out of poverty, but there was nothing that fundamentally prevented me from

doing so. Homeless individuals are oftentimes prevented from working because they do not have valid identification. Individuals must have documents in order to obtain identification. It is difficult for homeless persons to keep or obtain identifying documents, especially for those who were not born in-state. This bill helps people navigate the process of obtaining documentation in order to get a state-issued ID to be able to work and find housing.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Bob Hasegawa, Prime Sponsor; Rud Browne, ID to Work.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.