

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5929

As of January 25, 2022

Title: An act relating to changing the membership of the legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force.

Brief Description: Changing the membership of the legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force.

Sponsors: Senators Wilson, C. and Nguyen; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation: 1/25/22.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands the membership of the Legislative-Executive WorkFirst Poverty Oversight Task Force to include a representative from the Women's Commission, the LGBTQ Commission and the Office of Equity.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, REENTRY & REHABILITATION

Staff: Alison Mendiola (786-7488)

Background: Legislative-Executive WorkFirst Poverty Reduction Oversight Task Force. The Legislative-Executive WorkFirst Poverty Reduction Oversight Task Force (LEWPRO) was established in 2018, replacing the Legislative-Executive WorkFirst Oversight Task Force.

LEWPRO is tasked with:

- overseeing the operation of the WorkFirst and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs;

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- determining evidence-based outcome measures for the WorkFirst program;
- developing accountability measures for WorkFirst recipients and agencies responsible for recipient progress toward self-sufficiency;
- collaborating with the Intergenerational Poverty Advisory Committee to develop and monitoring strategies to prevent and address adverse childhood experiences and reduce intergenerational poverty;
- seeking input on best practices for poverty reduction from service providers, community-based organizations, legislators, state agencies, stakeholders, the business community, and subject matter experts;
- collaborating with partner agencies and the Intergenerational Poverty Advisory Committee to analyze available data and information regarding intergenerational poverty; and
- recommending policy actions to the Governor and the Legislature to effectively reduce intergenerational poverty and promote and encourage self-sufficiency.

Legislative-Executive WorkFirst Poverty Reduction Oversight Task Force Membership. Voting members include four members of the Senate, four members of the House of Representatives, and eight members representing the Department of Social and Health Services, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, the Department of Commerce, the Employment Security Division, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Health, the Department of Corrections, and the State Board on Community and Technical Colleges. The Governor appoints five nonvoting members to the LEWPRO representing the Commission on African-American Affairs, the Commission on Hispanic Affairs, the Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, and the Office of Financial Management.

The Women's Commission. The purpose of the Women's Commission is to improve the well-being of women, by enabling them to participate fully in all fields of endeavor, assisting them in obtaining governmental services, and promoting equal compensation and fairness in employment for women. The Women's Commission addresses issues relevant to the problems and needs of women, such as domestic violence, child care, child support, sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, equal compensation and job pathways opportunities in employment, and the specific needs of women of color. The Women's Commission was created in 2018 and consists of nine members.

The LGBTQ Commission. The LGBTQ Commission was created to improve the state's interface with the LGBTQ community, identify the needs of its members, and ensure there is an effective means of advocating for LGBTQ equity in all aspects of state government. The LGBTQ Commission was created in 2019 and consists of 15 members.

The Office of Equity. The Office of Equity was created in 2021 and works with state agencies to increase access to equitable opportunities to bridge opportunity gaps and reduce disparities. The Office of Equity also works with communities to develop the state's five - year equity plan.

Summary of Bill: LEWPRO's membership is expanded to include a representative from the Women's Commission, the LGBTQ Commission and the Office of Equity. These non-voting positions are appointed by the Governor.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not 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: This is a DSHS request bill, on behalf of LEWPRO who recommends added representation on the task force from these three groups. In terms of experience with poverty reduction and mitigation, the advisory group fills that role and advises LEWPRO on these matters. Poverty affects many diverse communities and it is important they are all the able to have their challenges heard by the Legislature. While these additions may seem too small to some, they will ensure we take the next step forward in providing equitable access to poverty reduction.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Claire Wilson, Prime Sponsor; Babs Roberts, Dept. of Social and Health Services, Economic Services Administration.

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