

SSB 5256 - H AMD 603

By Representative Walsh

NOT ADOPTED 04/11/2023

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 **"Sec. 1.** RCW 74.13.802 and 2022 c 297 s 965 are each amended to
4 read as follows:

5 (1) Beginning July 1, 2020, the department shall establish a
6 child welfare housing assistance pilot program, which provides
7 housing vouchers, rental assistance, navigation, and other support
8 services to eligible families.

9 (a) The department shall operate or contract for the operation of
10 the child welfare housing assistance pilot program under subsection
11 (3) of this section in one county west of the crest of the Cascade
12 mountain range and one county east of the crest of the Cascade
13 mountain range.

14 (b) The child welfare housing assistance pilot program is
15 intended to shorten the time that children remain in out-of-home
16 care.

17 (2) A parent with a child who is dependent pursuant to chapter
18 13.34 RCW and whose primary remaining barrier to reunification is the
19 lack of appropriate housing is eligible for the child welfare housing
20 assistance pilot program.

21 (3) The department shall contract with an outside entity or
22 entities to operate the child welfare housing assistance pilot
23 program. If no outside entity or entities are available to operate
24 the program or specific parts of the program, the department may
25 operate the program or the specific parts that are not operated by an
26 outside entity.

27 (4) Families may be referred to the child welfare housing
28 assistance pilot program by a caseworker, an attorney, a guardian ad
29 litem as defined in chapter 13.34 RCW, a parent ally as defined in
30 RCW 2.70.060, an office of public defense social worker, or the
31 court.

1 (5) The department shall consult with a stakeholder group that
2 must include, but is not limited to, the following:

3 (a) Parent allies;

4 (b) Parent attorneys and social workers managed by the office of
5 public defense parent representation program;

6 (c) The department of commerce;

7 (d) Housing experts;

8 (e) Community-based organizations;

9 (f) Advocates; and

10 (g) Behavioral health providers.

11 (6) The stakeholder group established in subsection (5) of this
12 section shall begin meeting after July 28, 2019, and assist the
13 department in design of the child welfare housing assistance pilot
14 program in areas including, but not limited to:

15 (a) Equitable racial, geographic, ethnic, and gender distribution
16 of program support;

17 (b) Eligibility criteria;

18 (c) Creating a definition of homeless for purposes of eligibility
19 for the program; and

20 (d) Options for program design that include outside entities
21 operating the entire program or specific parts of the program.

22 (7) By ~~((December))~~ November 1, ((2021)) 2024, the department
23 shall report outcomes for the child welfare housing assistance pilot
24 program to the ~~((oversight board for children, youth, and families
25 established pursuant to RCW 43.216.015. The))~~ legislature. At a
26 minimum, the report must include ((racial, geographic, ethnic, and
27 gender distribution of program support))).

28 (a) The number of families anticipated to be served by the
29 expansion of the program provided in section 2, chapter . . . , Laws
30 of 2023 (section 2 of this act); and

31 (b) The estimated cost savings provided through expansion of the
32 program provided in section 2, chapter . . . , Laws of 2023 (section 2
33 of this act).

34 (8) The child welfare housing assistance pilot program
35 established in this section is subject to the availability of funds
36 appropriated for this purpose.

37 ~~((9) This section expires June 30, 2023.))~~

38 **Sec. 2.** RCW 74.13.802 and 2023 c . . . s 1 (section 1 of this act)
39 are each amended to read as follows:

1 (1) (~~Beginning July 1, 2020~~) Within funds appropriated for this
2 specific purpose, the department shall (~~establish~~) administer a
3 child welfare housing assistance (~~pilot~~) program, which provides
4 housing vouchers, rental assistance, navigation, and other support
5 services to eligible families.

6 (a) The department shall operate or contract for the operation of
7 the child welfare housing assistance (~~pilot~~) program under
8 subsection (3) of this section in one (~~county~~) or more counties
9 west of the crest of the Cascade mountain range and one (~~county~~) or
10 more counties east of the crest of the Cascade mountain range.

11 (b) The child welfare housing assistance (~~pilot~~) program is
12 intended to reduce the need for foster care placement and to shorten
13 the time that children remain in out-of-home care when placement is
14 necessary.

15 (2) (~~A parent with a child who is dependent pursuant to chapter~~
16 ~~13.34 RCW and whose primary remaining barrier to reunification is the~~
17 ~~lack of appropriate housing is eligible for the child welfare housing~~
18 ~~assistance pilot program.)) The following families are eligible for
19 assistance from the child welfare housing assistance program:~~

20 (a) A parent with a child who is dependent pursuant to chapter
21 13.34 RCW and a lack of appropriate housing is a remaining barrier to
22 reunification; and

23 (b) A parent of a child who is a candidate for foster care as
24 defined in RCW 26.44.020 and whose housing instability is a barrier
25 to the child remaining in the home.

26 (3) The department shall contract with an outside entity or
27 entities, who must have a demonstrated understanding of the
28 importance of stable housing for children and families involved or at
29 risk of being involved with the child welfare system, to operate the
30 child welfare housing assistance (~~pilot~~) program. If no outside
31 entity or entities are available to operate the program or specific
32 parts of the program, the department may operate the program or the
33 specific parts that are not operated by an outside entity.

34 (4) Families may be referred to the child welfare housing
35 assistance (~~pilot~~) program by a department caseworker, an attorney,
36 a guardian ad litem as defined in chapter 13.34 RCW, a parent ally as
37 defined in RCW 2.70.060, an office of public defense social worker,
38 or the court.

39 (5) The department shall consult with a stakeholder group that
40 must include, but is not limited to, the following:

1 (a) Parent allies;

2 (b) Parent attorneys and social workers managed by the office of
3 public defense parent representation program;

4 (c) The department of commerce;

5 (d) Housing experts;

6 (e) Community-based organizations;

7 (f) Advocates; and

8 (g) Behavioral health providers.

9 (6) The stakeholder group established in subsection (5) of this
10 section shall begin meeting after July 28, 2019, and assist the
11 department in design of the child welfare housing assistance
12 (~~(((pilot)))~~) program in areas including, but not limited to:

13 (a) Equitable racial, geographic, ethnic, and gender distribution
14 of program support;

15 (b) Eligibility criteria;

16 (c) Creating a definition of homeless for purposes of eligibility
17 for the program; and

18 (d) Options for program design that include outside entities
19 operating the entire program or specific parts of the program.

20 (7) (~~(((By)))~~) Beginning November 1, 2024, the department shall
21 annually report outcomes for the child welfare housing assistance
22 pilot program to the legislature. At a minimum, when available, the
23 report must include the following information:

24 (~~(((The number of families anticipated to be served by the
25 expansion of the program provided in section 2, chapter . . . , Laws
26 of 2023 (section 2 of this act)))~~) Distribution of the child welfare
27 housing assistance program by race, geography, ethnicity, and gender
28 including a discussion of whether this distribution was equitable;
29 and

30 (~~(((The estimated cost savings provided through expansion of
31 the program provided in section 2, chapter . . . , Laws of 2023
32 (section 2 of this act)))~~) Any recommendations for legislative changes
33 to the child welfare housing assistance program.

34 (~~(((8) The child welfare housing assistance pilot program
35 established in this section is subject to the availability of funds
36 appropriated for this purpose.))~~)

37 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. Section 1 of this act is necessary for the
38 immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or

1 support of the state government and its existing public institutions,
2 and takes effect June 30, 2023.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Section 2 of this act takes effect July 1,
4 2025."

5 Correct the title.

EFFECT: Makes the following changes to the underlying bill:

Delays the current components of the bill that expand eligibility for the Child Welfare Housing Assistance Program and makes other changes to the Child Welfare Assistance Program until July 1, 2025.

Allows the Child Welfare Housing Pilot Program to continue beyond its current expiration date (June 30, 2023), but requires that the Department of Children, Youth, and Families provide a report to the Legislature by November 1, 2024, that includes: (a) The number of families anticipated to be served by the expansion of the program that will occur on July 1, 2025; and (b) the estimated cost savings provided through that expansion of the program.

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