

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5943

As of January 18, 2024

Title: An act relating to developing a resource data tool to connect Washington residents to services and resources.

Brief Description: Developing a resource data tool to connect Washington residents to services and resources.

Sponsors: Senators Gildon, Boehnke, Hasegawa and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services: 1/18/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Washington Information Network (WIN) 211 to develop and implement a resource data tool, including a mobile application by the name of Whole WA, for the purpose of assisting user with accessing both public and private resources and services, subject to appropriation.
- Directs WIN 211 to convene a Whole WA advisory group to develop a plan to launch the resource data tool by January 1, 2025, subject to appropriation.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Staff: Alison Mendiola 7 786-7488

Background: In 2003, legislation was enacted to create 211 as the official state dialing code for public access to information and referral for health and human services and information about access to services after a disaster. The Washington Information Network (WIN) 211 is a 501(c)(3) corporation that administers the program. WIN 211 awards grants to approved organizations to provide 211 services across the state. Currently, there are eight

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regional providers.

Summary of Bill: Whole WA. WIN 211 is to develop and implement a data resource tool, which is to include a mobile application, Whole WA, assisting users in accessing state and private resources and services. Before a state agency, department, or funded program that provides health and human services establishes a new public community resource database, internet-based directory, or mobile application, they are to consult with WIN 211 about accessing the resource through Whole WA to ensure there is no duplication of service or cost to the state.

WIN 211 is to convene a Whole WA advisory group composed of experts, interested parties, and other similar stakeholders. The purpose of the advisory group is to develop a plan and framework for launching the resource data tool, including a web portal and mobile application to make public and private resources more accessible. The resource data tool is to be launched by January 1, 2025, at which time the advisory group is dissolved.

Appropriation: The bill contains a section or sections to limit implementation to the availability of amounts appropriated for that specific purpose.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 7, 2024.

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: When people need help with utilities or other necessities, they don't know where to go which is why we need a central database for this information. There are so many organizations, both private and public, doing good work, we need one entity managing this information, including a mobile app that would eventually have real data for example, about how many beds might be available at a shelter as well as directions to that shelter. Consolidating into one location could also result in a savings since right now different agencies are managing their own sites. People are accustomed to getting their information online, so having this information in one place would be great. Right now, when people call 211 and information is provided, it may not be accurate or updated as providers don't always let you know.

OTHER: We need to make sure this information is accessible to people with disabilities.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Chris Gildon, Prime Sponsor; TIM SULLIVAN, Washington 211; Aundrea Jackson, WA211 and Crisis Connections; Joyce Newsom, People For People; Deb Miller, Action Health Partners.

OTHER: robert wardell, self adovates.

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