H-0324.2

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**HOUSE BILL 1344**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Barnard, Cortes, Dufault, Couture, Farivar, Reed, Hill, Caldier, Taylor, Pollet, Nance, Gregerson, and Callan

AN ACT Relating to increasing access to respite care for those with intellectual or developmental disabilities and their caregivers; adding a new section to chapter 71A.12 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that respite care is an essential component of waiver services as it provides much needed breaks to the main caregiver of a person with intellectual or developmental disabilities, as well as to the person being cared for. Respite care is a popular service with a high usage rate, but many people need additional respite care in order to live independently in the community, and their main caregivers need additional breaks from caregiving.

The legislature therefore declares that given the fundamental importance of respite care to both the caregiver and the person being cared for, in addition to the respite care currently offered, respite care should be added to the aggregate portion of the basic plus and children's intensive in-home behavioral support waivers so that aggregate funds can be accessed for respite care without prior administrative approval once the annual assessed hours have been exhausted.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 71A.12 RCW to read as follows:

(1) By September 1, 2025, the department shall submit a waiver amendment to the centers for medicare and medicaid services to add respite care to the list of aggregate services available under the basic plus waiver and the children's intensive in-home behavioral support waiver. For purposes of the children's intensive in-home behavioral support waiver, "aggregate services" refers to the service cluster that most closely resembles the list of aggregate services under the basic plus waiver.

(2) Upon the approval from the centers for medicare and medicaid services, the department shall immediately update the basic plus and children's intensive in-home behavioral support waivers to include respite care as an aggregate service.

(3) The department may adopt rules as necessary to implement the requirements in this section.

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