

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

ESB 5798

Title: *An act relating to temporary assistance for needy families; amending RCW 74.12.010, 74.12.035, and 74.08A.120; and repealing RCW 74.12.036.*

Brief Description: *Assisting needy families.*

Sponsors: *Senators Fairley, Winsley, and Franklin; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.*

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Meeting Date: *March 29, 1999.*

Bill Analysis Prepared by: *Dave Knutson (786-7146).*

Background: *The benefits of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) are generally available to qualified families with dependent children under the age of 18. Children up to the age of 19 are eligible if they are expected to complete school. Older dependent children, no matter what their condition, do not qualify a family for TANF grant assistance.*

When considering a family's assets to determine financial qualification, the earned income of a dependent child who is a full-time student is disregarded. A state standard of need is applied to the family's assets.

In addition, welfare is not generally payable to a family in any month in which the adult in the family is participating in a strike.

Summary of Bill: *When determining a family's qualification for TANF, the state standard of need is not considered and the earned income of a dependent child who is a full-time student is not disregarded. Otherwise qualified families are not prohibited from receiving welfare if the adult ("caretaker relative") is involved in a strike.*

Children between 18 and 21 years of age who have disabilities and are full-time students may receive TANF assistance. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is also authorized to grant eligibility exceptions to children between 18 and 21, on a discretionary basis, if DSHS determines that the exception will enable the child to complete his or her high school education, GED, or vocational education.

Legal immigrant eligibility for state food assistance is clarified. Reference to federal law is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 23, 1999.

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