

RCW 43.330.730 Finding—2015 c 296. The legislature finds that there is a retirement savings access gap in Washington; that Americans reach the median salary four years later than they did in 1980 and therefore have four fewer years of savings opportunities; and that one in six Americans retire in poverty. Employees who are unable to effectively build their retirement savings risk living on low incomes in their elderly years and are more likely to become dependent on state services. Further, small businesses, which employ more than forty percent of private sector employees in Washington, often choose not to offer retirement plans to employees due to concerns about costs, administrative burdens, and potential liability that they believe such plans would place on their business. In response, the legislature recognizes the work of the federal government in addressing these issues by establishing the myRA program: A safe, affordable, and accessible retirement vehicle designed to remove barriers to retirement savings. In addition, the legislature recognizes that many private financial services firms in Washington currently offer high quality retirement options for small businesses and their employees.

The Washington small business retirement marketplace will remove barriers to entry into the retirement market for small businesses by educating small employers on plan availability and promoting, without mandated participation, qualified, low-cost, low-burden retirement savings vehicles and myRA. The marketplace furthers greater retirement plan access for the residents of Washington while ensuring that individuals participating in these retirement plans will have all the protections offered by the employee retirement income security act. Further, the Washington small business retirement marketplace will not pose any significant financial burden upon taxpayers. The Washington small business retirement marketplace will be the best way for Washington to close the retirement savings access gap, protect the fiscal stability of the state and its citizens well into the future, and further cement its place as a national leader in retirement and investor promotion and protection. The marketplace will educate and promote retirement saving among employees and in particular market to small employers with fifty or fewer employees. [2015 c 296 § 1.]