
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7103 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING THE KATIE BECKETT WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner to (1) develop a five-year plan to eliminate the waiting list for the Katie Beckett Waiver Program and add home modification coverage as a service offered through the program and (2) report by October 1, 2026, to the Appropriations and Human Services committees on recommended state appropriations needed to implement the plan. The Katie Beckett program is a Medicaid waiver that allows children with severe physical disabilities to be eligible for Medicaid home- and community-based care. According to DSS, 331 people are currently on the waitlist.

The bill also lowers the maximum age for Katie Beckett participants from 21 to 18. (At age 18, people in this group become eligible for coverage under a different Medicaid program.)

The bill requires the DSS commissioner to include information on eligibility criteria and provider reimbursement rates for the waiver program in its Medicaid provider bulletins. It also requires DSS to post certain program information on its website.

Lastly, the bill requires DSS to annually administer a survey, via mail or e-mail, to applicants on the program's waiting list. The survey must let applicants confirm or update demographic information and choose to remain on the waiting list or be removed. Under the bill, applicants who do not respond to the survey must remain on the waiting list.

*House Amendment "A" (1) extends the deadline for DSS's report on its five-year plan by one year, (2) adds requirements for DSS's website and annual survey of applicants on the waitlist, and (3) removes a

provision in the underlying bill requiring DSS to create a brochure on the program and distribute it to Medicaid providers.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the change to the maximum participant age is effective July 1, 2025.

DSS WEBSITE REQUIREMENTS

The bill requires the DSS commissioner to publish the following information on the department's website by January 1, 2026:

1. eligibility criteria for the Katie Beckett Waiver program, including any income or asset thresholds;
2. a summary of available services under the program;
3. a list of contact information for family support groups and advocacy groups for children and young adults with severe debilitating diseases or conditions;
4. a list of other Medicaid waiver programs or Medicaid state plan services that offer services for children and young adults described above and eligibility criteria for these programs;
5. a list of private organizations and state programs that may offer funding for home modification or adaptive equipment for people with disabilities; and
6. a link to the Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS) website for information on adaptive equipment purchases or assistive technology loans.

BACKGROUND

Legislative History

The House referred the bill (File 467) to the Appropriations Committee, which reported out a substitute that eliminated provisions in the underlying bill that would have required DSS to establish a website for the Katie Beckett program with a portal that could provide initial eligibility screening and waitlist updates.

Related Bill

sSB 1158 (File 153), favorably reported by the Human Services Committee, renames ADS as the Department of Disability Services and creates a new Department on Aging.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 22 Nay 0 (03/13/2025)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 50 Nay 0 (05/05/2025)