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SENATE BILL 6431

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State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Senators Mullet, Litzow, Billig, and Fain

Read first time 01/20/16. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to maternity and paternity leave for K-12  
2 teachers; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the state is  
5 currently facing a teacher shortage crisis, with evidence showing  
6 that teachers are leaving the profession at an unprecedented rate.  
7 Additionally, the legislature notes that recent studies by the  
8 professional educator standards board show that beginning teacher  
9 retention in Washington follows the national pattern, with roughly  
10 half of new teachers leaving the profession in the first five years.  
11 As the state continues to implement class size reductions, the  
12 ability to attract and retain quality educators remains a critical  
13 component for successfully implementing ongoing educational reforms  
14 and increasing student achievement. The legislature understands that  
15 there are multiple complex issues behind the current teacher shortage  
16 and retention problem and that many factors are often interrelated.  
17 It is the intent of the legislature to examine expanding family leave  
18 policies as one possible policy choice that could make the teaching  
19 profession more attractive in order to recruit promising new students  
20 into the profession and keep our existing high quality teachers in  
21 the classroom.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    (1) The joint legislative audit and review  
2 committee shall conduct an analysis of the costs and impacts  
3 associated with maternity and paternity leave for K-12 certificated  
4 classroom teachers. The analysis must include:

5        (a) The projected costs associated with implementing and  
6 maintaining a maternity and paternity leave program including, but  
7 not limited to, the projected number of K-12 certificated classroom  
8 teachers who would participate in a maternity and paternity leave  
9 program annually; and

10       (b) A comparison of how other states have implemented similar  
11 programs for K-12 employees including, but not limited to, the costs  
12 associated with implementing and maintaining a maternity and  
13 paternity leave program, the amount of maternity or paternity leave  
14 allotted for each employee, and the allowable benefit period of  
15 maternity or paternity leave.

16       (2) The joint legislative audit and review committee, with  
17 assistance from the Washington state institute for public policy,  
18 shall additionally analyze the impact of state-funded maternity and  
19 paternity leave on increasing recruitment and retention of teachers.

20       (3) To the extent data is not available at the statewide level,  
21 the joint legislative audit and review committee may use case studies  
22 or other methods to conduct the analysis.

23       (4) The joint legislative audit and review committee must submit  
24 a report of its findings to the appropriate senate committees by  
25 January 1, 2017.

26       (5) This section expires August 1, 2017.

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