

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1888

As Reported By House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to hospital assessments for data collection.

Brief Description: Revising provisions for assessments for hospital data collection and reporting.

Sponsors: Representatives Dyer, Ebersole and Kremen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/24/95, 2/28/95 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Dyer, Chairman; Backlund, Vice Chairman; Hymes, Vice Chairman; Dellwo, Ranking Minority Member; Campbell; Casada; Crouse; Kessler; Morris; Sherstad and Skinner.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Cody, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; and Conway.

Staff: Bill Hagens (786-7131).

Background: The Comprehensive Hospital Abstract Reporting System (CHARS) was created to gather, analyze, and report hospital discharge data. To finance this activity there is assessed against "hospitals . . . no more than four one-hundredths of one percent of each hospital's gross operating costs" (RCW 170.170.080)

The Washington Health Services Act of 1993 placed a tax on hospitals of .75 percent (1994) and 1.5 percent (1995) to be deposited in the Health Services Account for the support of health reform activities.

Summary of Bill: The CHARS assessment is terminated as of June 30, 1995. After that date, the data requirements must be financed by an appropriation by the Legislature from the general fund or the health services account, or both.

The fiscal impact is estimated to be \$3.2 million for the biennium.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 19, 1995.

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

Testimony For: It is unfair for hospitals to fit the bill for the CHARS system because: (a) other entities beside hospitals use CHARS and (b) hospitals now are being taxed through the Health Services Account to support related activities.

Testimony Against: The bill removes \$3.2 million in needed funding for health data support without providing an adequate funding replacement.

Testified: Elizabeth Ward, Department of Health; and Dave Broderick, Washington State Hospital Association (pro).