

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5431

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 28, 1995

Title: An act relating to rural health care.

Brief Description: Repealing rural health care statutes.

Sponsors: Senators Prentice and Hale; by request of Insurance Commissioner.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/2/95, 2/28/95 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5431 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Quigley, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Fairley, Franklin, Moyer and Winsley.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: In 1990, statutes were enacted to enable small rural health care service arrangements to obtain licenses from the state Insurance Commissioner. Applicants were required to demonstrate minimum financial standards set by statute. The time period for this licensing provision ended on September 1, 1990. No companies are presently organized under this chapter.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The rural health care statutes under the state Insurance Commissioner are repealed. Intent language describes the special demographic, economic and geographic concerns of rural communities, relating to available, affordable health care services. The Department of Health is authorized to set up a rural health care committee to study rural health issues and report to the Legislature by December, 1995.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill repealed all the rural health statutes under the Insurance Commissioner, without preserving any intent language pertaining to the special needs of rural communities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The rural health care statutes under the state Insurance Commissioner are obsolete and should be repealed.

Testimony Against: Language describing the unique problems facing rural communities should be retained somewhere in statute.

Testified: John Woodall, Deputy Insurance Commissioner (pro); Greg Vigdor, WHA (con).