

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5186

As Passed Senate, March 11, 2005

Title: An act relating to increasing the physical activity of Washington citizens.

Brief Description: Increasing the physical activity of the citizens of Washington state.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Franklin, Kohl-Welles, Keiser, Rockefeller, Doumit, Kline, Regala, McAuliffe, Poulsen, Fraser and Jacobsen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/24/05, 2/28/05 [DPS, DNP, w/oRec].
Passed Senate: 3/11/05, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5186 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Thibaudeau, Vice Chair; Franklin, Kastama, Kline and Poulsen.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Benson.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Brandland, Johnson and Parlette.

Staff: Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

Background: It is widely accepted that regular physical activity and exercise is essential for maintaining good health. In a recent study, the two most popular forms of regular exercise by citizens of Washington are walking and biking. Health planners both nationally and in our state have developed public health policies which emphasize that access to safe and accessible ways to walk and bike should be a priority in every community. The state Department of Health has led an effort to include as many public and private partners as possible in planning for increased access to physical activity for citizens in the state.

Summary of Bill: The Legislature intends to promote statewide policy and planning efforts that increase access to inexpensive or free opportunities for regular exercise in all communities.

County and city comprehensive plans are directed, wherever possible, to utilize urban planning approaches that promote physical activity.

Transportation planning in cities, towns, and counties should incorporate policy and infrastructure changes that promote non-motorized transit.

The Health Care Authority must report to the Governor and legislature no later than December 1, 2006, on progress in implementing, and evaluating the results of, a work site health promotion program.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction must promote adoption of school-based curricula and policies that provide quality physical education for all students.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: If we make it easier and safer for people to choose an active lifestyle, they will more often than not make good choices. Must fight obesity and other chronic illnesses. This legislation will help walkers, joggers and bike riders and improve the community health.

Testimony Against: None.

Other: The State Parks will do their best to increase the numbers of people with free access to our state parks but ask that this not be mandated. Last year gave out 19, 000 free passes. Do not know how much more we can do within our budget.

Who Testified: PRO: Jane Moore, MD, Washington Association for Promoting Physical Activity; Maxine Hayes, MD; Department of Health; Craig McLaughlin, State Board of Health; Kristen Bush, NW Parks Foundation. OTHER: Fred Ramiro, WA State Parks.

House Amendment(s): Section 2 of bill is removed, which declared that the public policy of the State of Washington included health planning concerned with building and supporting healthy environments that make it easier for Washington residents to be physically active.

Language is removed requiring the transportation element of the plan to incorporate policy and infrastructure changes that promote nonmotorized transit.

Language is added to include new or enhanced bicycle or pedestrian facilities, or other applicable changes that promote nonmotorized transit.

Language is added that requires that the pedestrian and bicycle component of the transportation element include collaboration regarding planned improvements for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and corridors.

Passed House: 93-2.