

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6470

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care & Wellness

Title: An act relating to training medical students, nurses, and medical technicians and assistants to work with patients with developmental disabilities.

Brief Description: Training medical students, nurses, and medical technicians and assistants to work with patients with developmental disabilities.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Kauffman, Schoesler, Marr, Prentice, Tom, Rasmussen, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Kilmer and Roach).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 2/25/08, 2/27/08 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill
(As Amended by House Committee)

- Establishes a grant program to support research and training projects to improve services to people with developmental disabilities provided by health care providers.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Barlow, Campbell, Green, Moeller, Pedersen and Schual-Berke.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Hinkle, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Condotta, DeBolt and Seaquist.

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Secretary of Health and the 16 health professions boards and commissions regulate 62 health care professions. These entities conduct several functions including establishing education and training requirements, enforcing licensing standards, and conducting disciplinary proceedings. Approximately 300,000 people hold a credential to practice a health profession in Washington.

The Department of Social and Health Services (Department) provides services to persons with developmental disabilities designed to assist those persons in acquiring and maintaining life skills. A developmental disability is a condition which started before the age 18, results in a substantial handicap, is expected to continue indefinitely, and is attributable to mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, or another neurological or other condition similar to mental retardation.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Subject to available funding, the Department shall administer a grant program (program) to support research and training projects to improve services to people with developmental disabilities. The program shall support incentive grants to students and faculty at medical schools, nursing schools, and special and technical care programs at technical schools. The Department must submit a report to the Legislature by December 1, 2008, about the incentive grants awarded under the program, as well as other efforts to expand or improve training for students in treating individuals with developmental disabilities.

The bill is null and void if not referenced in the operating budget.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

The substitute bill requires the Department to consult with the Developmental Disabilities Council and the state-designated protection and advocacy system when implementing the grant program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Patients with developmental disabilities have cognitive and physical challenges to receiving health care services. Having staff with training is important for both the provider and the patient. People with developmental disabilities have a right to high quality health care. There is a great lack of understanding among health care providers in the care of developmentally disabled patients due to inadequate training and staffing. This concept

developed as part of a national initiative to get more training for students in health care programs.

(In support with concerns) As the developmentally disabled population ages, providers need to know how to treat the effects of aging on developmentally disabled patients. This bill is a positive step forward to training doctors in how to be effective in treating developmentally disabled patients. There should be public input from the developmentally disabled community.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Senator Kauffman, prime sponsor; and Maureen Durkan and Rick Jensen, Action for Developmental Disabilities.

(In support with concerns) David Lord, Disability Rights Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.