

**Early Learning & Human Services  
Committee**

**HB 2737**

**Brief Description:** Concerning fetal alcohol exposure.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kagi, Sawyer, Smith, Ryu, Gregerson, Goodman and Freeman.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires that premises serving or selling alcohol post 18 by 24 inch signs in conspicuous places easily seen by patrons warning that the consumption of alcohol while pregnant can cause birth defects.
- Establishes a work group to address fetal exposure issues related to identification, prevention, and intervention that must provide a report to the Legislature by December 1, 2014.

**Hearing Date:** 2/13/14

**Staff:** Luke Wickham (786-7146).

**Background:**

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs).

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders are a group of conditions that can occur in a person whose mother consumed alcohol during pregnancy. These effects can include physical issues and issues with behavior and learning. These conditions can affect individuals differently and can range from mild to severe. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the symptoms might include abnormal facial features, smaller head size, shorter than average height, low body weight, poor coordination, hyperactive behavior, difficulty paying attention, poor memory, difficulty in school, learning disabilities, speech and language delays, an intellectual disability, poor reasoning and judgment skills, sleep and sucking problems as a baby, vision or hearing problems, and problems with the heart, kidneys, or bones.

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Different terms are used for FASDs, depending on the symptoms. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is the more severe end of the FASD spectrum. Individuals with FAS might have abnormal facial features, growth problems, and central nervous system problems. Individuals with Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder might have intellectual disabilities and problems with behavior and learning. Individuals with Alcohol-Related Birth Defects might have problems with the heart, kidneys, or bones or with hearing.

Fetal Alcohol Exposure Interagency Agreement (Interagency Agreement).

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Corrections (DOC), and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must execute an interagency agreement to ensure the coordination of identification, prevention, and intervention programs for children who have fetal alcohol exposure, and for women at high risk of having children with fetal alcohol exposure. The Interagency Agreement must provide a process for community groups to participate in the review and development of programs administered by the agreement.

Consumption of Alcohol During Pregnancy Warning Signs.

The Liquor Control Board (LCB) requires that a business with a liquor license post signs provided by the LCB warning of the possible danger of birth defects which may be caused as a result of consumption of alcohol. The following premises must post these signs:

- premises that serve alcohol for consumption on-site must post signs in plain view at the main entrance to the liquor licensed portion of the business and in the women's public restroom closest to the licensed area;
- airports, convention centers, sports facilities, and other licensed premises that have more than one location for alcohol consumption must post the signs in a place that is clearly visible to the majority of patrons entering the premises;
- grocery stores and wine or beer specialty shops must post signs at each permanent display area of alcohol, at the cash register, or at the main entrance; and
- breweries and wineries must post signs in plain view at the main entrance to areas where alcohol is sold and at the main entrance to tasting areas.

The LCB issues three and a half by five inch signs to businesses in the form of a sticker. These signs include a picture of a pregnant mother and father and text stating the following: "Avoid alcohol during pregnancy. Alcohol use during pregnancy may cause birth defects such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. For more information about FAS please visit March of Dimes at [marchofdimes.com](http://marchofdimes.com)."

**Summary of Bill:**

Premises that serve alcohol for consumption, grocery stores that sell alcohol, beer and wine specialty shops, breweries, wineries, and taverns must post in a conspicuous place easily seen by patrons a printed sign at least 18 inches by 24 inches, with letters at least two inches high, warning that consumption of alcohol during pregnancy can cause birth defects.

The LCB has the authority to adopt rules to carry out the sign requirements that will increase the visibility of signage and may adopt additional rules beyond the minimum requirements provided.

The Interagency Agreement must arrange a work group to address fetal alcohol exposure issues related to identification, prevention, and intervention. The work group is co-chaired by the DSHS, the University of Washington Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Diagnostic and Prevention Network, and the University of Washington Fetal Alcohol and Drug Unit. The work group must include the DOH, the DOC, the OSPI, and other interested organizations.

The work group shall develop recommendations and provide a report to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2014. The report must include the following:

- identification of evidence-based practices for early screening, prevention, and diagnosis of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders;
- identification of evidence-based practices for interventions that can be used with individuals experiencing fetal alcohol spectrum disorders; and
- recommendations of policy changes that would improve the identification, prevention, or interventions related to fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 12, 2014.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.