

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5143

As Reported by House Committee On: Health Care & Wellness

Title: An act relating to providing information regarding childhood immunizations to expecting parents.

Brief Description: Concerning the availability of childhood immunization resources for expecting parents.

Sponsors: Senators Becker, Bailey, Dammeier, Rivers, Frockt, Brown and Parlette.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 3/17/15, 3/26/15 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Health to develop and make available resources for expecting parents regarding childhood immunizations.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Riccelli, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Harris, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Clibborn, Jinkins, Johnson, Moeller, Robinson, Rodne, Short, Tharinger and Van De Wege.

Staff: Alexa Silver (786-7190).

Background:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that children be immunized against chickenpox, diphtheria, haemophilus influenzae type b, hepatitis A and B, influenza, measles, mumps, pertussis, polio, pneumococcal, rotavirus, rubella, and tetanus. The CDC immunization schedule recommends that specific vaccines be given to a child at birth and at 2, 4, 6, 12, and 15 months of age.

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 Department of Health publishes materials related to childhood immunizations on its website, including an electronic book, frequently asked questions, and web pages specific to particular vaccines and vaccine-preventable diseases. The materials cover topics such as vaccine-preventable diseases, how vaccines work, vaccine ingredients, and vaccine safety.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Health must develop and make available resources for expecting parents regarding recommended childhood immunizations. The resources are intended to be provided to expecting parents by health care providers to encourage discussion of childhood immunizations and postnatal care.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The recent outbreaks of measles and pertussis are reminders of the vulnerability of the community's health and the importance of getting recommended vaccinations on time to ensure community immunity. Immunizations save lives and are among the most effective ways to protect young children from serious diseases. Washington's immunization rates are below state and national goals. Skipping or delaying a dose of a vaccine leaves the child and the community at risk. It is important to the health of our communities to provide proper education and address parents' concerns so they vaccinate their children rather than opting out. Most parents who are vaccine-hesitant just need more information, understanding, and reassurance about vaccines. This bill encourages discussion between parents and providers, and provider recommendations increase immunization rates. Providing reliable, evidence-based information before decisions are made is good policy. Parents make decisions during pregnancy, so this is the perfect time to make sure information is available to families. There should also be information available on immunizations that pregnant women need to protect the mother and child during and after pregnancy.

This bill will add great resources to current outreach efforts. What to do about immunizations is one of the most important decisions that a parent can make. The decision should be based on sound medical facts, which should be readily available as early as possible. The Department of Health (Department) currently provides resources for parents and providers, including print materials that can be ordered for free, information on the website, and information sent through the child profile health promotion system. The Group Health Foundation and others intend to offer resources to the Department to help implement this bill.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Carrie Glover, Within Reach; Michele Roberts, Department of Health; Sydney Smith Zvara, Association of Washington Healthcare Plans; and Chris Marr, Group Health Cooperative.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.