

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5293

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning the use of hydrocodone products by licensed optometrists in Washington state.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Senators Becker, Keiser, Rivers, Conway, Dammeier, Hobbs, Angel, Frockt, Bailey, Ericksen, Mullet and Benton).

Senate Committee on Health Care
House Committee on Health Care & Wellness

Background: Drug Schedules. Drugs and other substances that are considered controlled substances under the Controlled Substances Act are divided into five categories:

- Schedule I controlled substances are those that have no currently acceptable medical use in the United States;
- Schedule II substances have a high potential for abuse, such as cocaine or Ritalin, which may lead to severe psychological or physical dependence;
- Schedule III drugs, substances, or chemicals are drugs with moderate to low potential for physical and psychological dependence; and
- Schedules IV and V controlled substances have low potentials for abuse.

Hydrocodone Classification. Hydrocodone is an opiate analgesic typically combined with other ingredients in products used to relieve moderate to severe pain. Federal law classified combination products with less than 15 milligrams of hydrocodone per dosage unit, e.g. Vicodin, as Schedule III narcotics. Products with 15 or more milligrams of hydrocodone per dosage unit were classified as Schedule II narcotics. In October 2014, the Drug Enforcement Administration rescheduled all hydrocodone combination products as Schedule II narcotics.

Optometrists and Controlled Substances. Optometrists examine the human eye for defects in vision and, after completing required didactic and clinical instruction, may use certain topical and oral drugs for diagnostic and treatment purposes. No optometrist may prescribe, dispense, purchase, possess, or administer drugs classified as Schedule III through V controlled substances, except as permitted by the Optometry Board of Washington for the treatment of diseases and conditions related to the human eye.

An optometrist may prescribe, dispense, or administer authorized controlled substances for up to seven days to treat a particular patient for a single trauma, episode, or condition, or for

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associated pain. Optometrists may not use, prescribe, dispense, purchase, possess, or administer any Schedule I or II controlled substance

Summary: Optometrists may use, prescribe, dispense, purchase, possess, or administer Schedule II hydrocodone combination products. The Board of Optometry may include Schedule II hydrocodone combination products in its list of approved oral controlled substances and oral legend drugs.

Votes on Final Passage:

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| Senate | 47 | 0 |
| House | 97 | 0 |

Effective: July 24, 2015