

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1628

---

As Reported By House Committee On:  
Human Services

**Title:** An act relating to immunization.

**Brief Description:** Enhancing childhood immunization.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Leonard, Dellwo, Riley, Rust, Valle, Brown, Karahalios, Flemming, Linville, Thibaudeau, Brough, Pruitt, Jones, Basich, King, Wang, Patterson, Johanson, Kessler, Bray, G. Cole, G. Fisher, Jacobsen, Locke, Sheldon, Rayburn, Cothorn, Wineberry, Veloria, Morris, J. Kohl, L. Johnson and Anderson.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Human Services, February 25, 1993, DP.

---

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Leonard, Chair; Riley, Vice Chair; Cooke, Ranking Minority Member; Talcott, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brown; Karahalios; Lisk; Padden; Patterson; and Thibaudeau.

**Staff:** John Welsh (786-7133).

**Background:** Current law requires every child attending any public and private school through the 12th grade, or licensed day care center, to provide proof of immunization or a certificate of exemption before or on the first day of attendance. A child can be exempted from the immunization requirement when certified by a physician as not advisable, or when parents certify that immunization is contrary to their religious, philosophical or personal beliefs.

There is no immunization requirement for preschool children, nor for attendance at higher educational and vocational institutions.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** There is a legislative finding that there has been an increase in the number of children contracting vaccine-preventable infectious diseases despite the availability of preventative immunizations. Parents are

often unaware of the public health risks and the need for timely immunizations.

Technical changes are made to the law governing the immunization requirements for schools and day care centers, which are now referenced as child care facilities. The secretary of health is required to establish, after July 1, 1993, up to five demonstration projects for the purpose of increasing immunization rates among preschool children. The projects are to identify the most effective, cost-efficient, and least burdensome manner to increase immunization rates, and to demonstrate the feasibility and efficacy of a statewide registry system for immunization tracking. The secretary is to coordinate and disseminate information on existing local efforts to increase immunization rates among preschool children.

The secretary is also to establish a statewide registry for immunization tracking and recall, in consultation with federal centers for disease control. The goals include: (1) tracking the immunization status of all children in the state, allowing access by public and private immunization providers; (2) facilitating periodic immunization reminders to parents; and (3) incorporating existing computer data available.

The Department of Health is required to implement a sustained public education campaign to increase immunization awareness and increase utilization of immunization services for parents of preschool children.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** Requirements by the Board of Health to establish an immunization schedule, adopt vaccine storage regulations, provide a mandatory immunization program for students of higher education, and administer an immunization enhancement grant program to counties are deleted.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For:** Targeting preschool age children for immunization will have an important effect on the spread of infectious diseases, which are on the increase. The investment in childhood immunization generates significant health care cost savings. Each dollar spent on immunization avoids \$11 in health care expenditures. Despite the availability of vaccines, parents are often unaware of the need for immunization and the public health risks resulting from failure to immunize.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Peg Walton, and Dorothy Fuller, Junior League; Toni Harper, Department of Public Health; Barry Lawson, citizen; and Beverly Jacobson, Seattle Area Hospital Council.