

**HB 2669-S - DIGEST**

(AS OF HOUSE 2ND READING 2/13/06)

Finds that specialty hospitals jeopardize the financial balance of community hospitals by selectively providing care to less ill patients, treating fewer medicare, medicaid, and uninsured patients, providing primarily care that is profitable to investors, and reducing community hospital staffing.

Declares that, to assure that private and public hospitals in Washington remain financially viable institutions able to provide general acute care in their communities and maintain the capacity to respond to local, state, and national emergencies, the legislature has concluded that specialty hospitals must meet certain conditions in order to be licensed. These conditions will ensure that specialty hospitals and community hospitals compete on a level playing field and, therefore, will minimize the adverse impacts of specialty hospitals on community general hospitals while assuring quality patient care.