
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 1015

Brief Description: Concerning exemption from immunization.

Sponsors: Representatives Bailey, Cody, Hinkle, Appleton, Seaquist, Roberts, Kagi, Jinkins, Johnson, Warnick, Orcutt, Moeller, Pedersen, Billig, Ladenburg, McCune and Van De Wege.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the form used to exempt a child from school immunizations to include a statement, to be signed by a health care practitioner, that information on the benefits and risks of immunization has been provided to the parent or legal guardian.

Hearing Date: 1/19/11

Staff: Morgan Powell (786-7119); and Chris Cordes (786-7103)

Background:

State law requires school children and children in licensed day care centers to provide proof of immunization against certain vaccine-preventable diseases. The stated purpose of the law is to promote the protection of the health of the public and individuals by providing a means for the eventual achievement of full immunization of school-age children against these diseases.

The Washington State Board of Health (Board) has adopted requirements, which specify the immunizations all children must receive before entering schools, preschools, and day care. However, a child will be exempt in whole or in part from the immunizations measures required by the Board when a certification is submitted that provides one of the following certifications:

- a written certification signed by a physician stating that a particular vaccine is not advisable for the child (Once such vaccine is no longer contraindicated the child will be required to be vaccinated.);
- a written certification signed by any parent or legal guardian of the child stating that the signator has religious beliefs contrary to the required immunization measures; or

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- a written certification signed by any parent or legal guardian of the child stating the signator has philosophical or personal objections to the immunization.

Summary of Bill:

The form used to exempt a child from school immunization requirements must include a statement, to be signed by a health care practitioner, that information about the benefits and risks of immunization was provided to the parent or legal guardian signing the immunization exemption. This change applies to forms used on or after the bill's effective date.

In addition to physicians, all health care practitioners are permitted to sign the written certification stating that a particular vaccine is not advisable for the child.

A health care practitioner is defined as a licensed physician, licensed naturopath, licensed physician assistant, or a licensed advanced registered nurse practitioner.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 1/11/11.

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