

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5431

As Passed House - Amended:

April 12, 1995

Title: An act relating to rural health care.

Brief Description: Repealing rural health care statutes.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Prentice and Hale; by request of Insurance Commissioner).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 3/24/95, 3/31/95 [DPA];

Appropriations: 4/3/95 [DPA(HC)].

Floor Activity:

Amended.

Passed House: 4/12/95, 96-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Dyer, Chairman; Backlund, Vice Chairman; Hymes, Vice Chairman; Cody, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell; Casada; Conway; Crouse; Kessler; Morris; Sherstad and Skinner.

Staff: Charlie Gavigan (786-7340).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended by Committee on Health Care. Signed by 30 members: Representatives Silver, Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Huff, Vice Chairman; Pelesky, Vice Chairman; Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Valle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Brumsickle; Carlson; Chappell; Cooke; Crouse; Dellwo; G. Fisher; Foreman; Grant; Hargrove; Hickel; Jacobsen; Lambert; Lisk; McMorris; Poulsen; Reams; Rust; Sehlin; Sheahan; Talcott; Thibaudeau and Wolfe.

Staff: Jim Lux (786-7152).

Background: In 1990, statutes were enacted to enable small rural health care service arrangements to obtain licenses from the state Insurance Commissioner. Applicants were required to demonstrate minimum financial standards set by statute. The time period for this licensing provision ended on September 1, 1990. No companies are presently organized under this chapter.

The Comprehensive Hospital Abstract Reporting System gathers, analyzes, and reports hospital discharge data.

Summary of Bill: The rural health care program under the state Insurance Commissioner is repealed. The special demographic, economic and geographic concerns of rural communities relating to available, affordable health care services are described.

The Department of Health (DOH) must continue the Comprehensive Hospital Abstract Reporting System; additional legislative direction is provided.

DOH must study the feasibility of a uniform quality assurance and improvement program. In doing so, DOH must consult with consumers, health carriers, health care providers and facilities, and public agencies. DOH must submit its final report and recommendations to the Legislature by December 31, 1995 but cannot adopt any related rules unless expressly directed to do so by an act of law. DOH, by July 1, 1995, is required to form an interagency group with the Health Care Authority, the Department of Social and Health Services, Office of the Insurance Commissioner, and the Department of Labor and Industries for coordination and consultation on quality assurance activities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on April 4, 1995.

Effective Date of Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: (Health Care) None.

(Appropriations) None.

Testimony Against: (Health Care) None.

(Appropriations) The Health Personnel Resource Plan should not be repealed because it provides a comprehensive analysis of health professions and services by geographic

location. The information is used to match health professionals with the medical needs of local communities.

Testified: (Health Care) None.

(Appropriations) Maria Gardipee, Department of Health.