

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6239

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**As Reported By House Committee On:**  
Health Care

**Title:** An act relating to osteoporosis prevention and treatment education.

**Brief Description:** Providing for osteoporosis prevention and treatment education.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Wojahn, Winsley, Thibaudeau, Loveland, Kohl, Long, Fairley, A. Anderson, Prentice, McAuliffe, Sheldon, Wood, Rinehart, Roach, Spanel, Hale, Drew, Franklin, Rasmussen, Snyder, Haugen, Fraser and Bauer).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Health Care: 2/23/96 [DPA].

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Dyer, Chairman; Backlund, Vice Chairman; Hymes, Vice Chairman; Cody, Ranking Minority Member; Casada; Conway; Crouse; Morris; Sherstad and Skinner.

**Staff:** Antonio Sanchez (786-7383).

**Background:** Osteoporosis is a devastating disease, found predominantly among women, that causes a thinning of the bones and often leads to severe fractures. These fractures cause pain and can lead to disability. As many as 25 million Americans suffer from this disease.

Osteoporosis affects approximately 50 percent of women and 20 percent of men. The direct and indirect costs of osteoporosis in the United States were estimated to be \$18 billion in 1993, and are expected to rise to \$60-80 billion by the year 2020.

Osteoporosis commonly progresses without symptoms and remains undiagnosed until it has advanced to the point that the patient suffers a fracture, typically of the hip, spine, or wrist.

Because there is no cure for osteoporosis, prevention, treatment, and early detection are critical for reducing prevalence.

Concern exists that, although substantial information about osteoporosis is available, it is not adequately distributed or designed to meet the needs of the public. It is suggested that there is a lack of knowledge among consumers, health care providers, and government agencies about the prevention, detection, and treatment of osteoporosis.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** Within available resources, the Department of Health is allowed to establish a statewide osteoporosis prevention and treatment education program. The program should promote public awareness and knowledge about osteoporosis, with an emphasis on educating consumers and health care professionals about the causes, risk factors, prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of osteoporosis.

The program is directed to provide a variety of services including information and referral, educational materials, training, media outreach, community forums, support groups, and risk assessment at public events.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** The department is given the authority to develop and provide the program within existing resources, thus making it revenue neutral.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** The problem is that the simple message of diet, exercise, and moderate lifestyle has not reached the population in a way that makes sense or in a way that helps people to understand that adequate calcium and exercise can add to the quality of an entire life. The answer is education. This is clearly outlined in this bill and is the right thing to do.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Dr. Maxine Hays, Department of Health.