

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5501

As Passed Senate, March 10, 1995

Title: An act relating to hospital regulation and inspection.

Brief Description: Streamlining hospital regulation and inspection.

Sponsors: Senators Bauer, Rinehart, Oke, Prince and Wojahn; by request of Legislative Budget Committee.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/21/95, 2/28/95 [DP].
Passed Senate, 3/10/95, 45-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Quigley, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Fairley, Franklin, Moyer and Winsley.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: The Health Services Act of 1993 directed the Legislative Budget Committee to study hospital health and safety regulations in Washington State, focusing on the regulations' cost and effectiveness. The study focused on eight areas perceived to be problematic, and found that while the regulatory areas reviewed are valuable for protecting the public's health and safety, there are several opportunities for eliminating duplication and streamlining the regulatory process.

Summary of Bill: Several of the recommendations of the Legislative Budget Committee are enacted including: setting minimum rules and standards for hospitals that are consistent with the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHCO); coordinating inspections between the Department of Social and Health Services and the Department of Health to avoid duplication; studying alternative strategies for achieving greater efficiency in the hospital building and design review process.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: These recommendations will save both hospitals and the state duplication of effort.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Rob Krell, LBC.

House Amendment(s): The following health care facilities are exempt from the state's certificate of need (CON) process: hospitals; psychiatric hospitals; ambulatory surgical facilities; home health agencies operating in counties with a population under 20,000 residents; sale, purchase or lease of any existing hospital; special needs and circumstances of osteopathic hospitals, nonallopathic services and children's hospitals.

Hospitals are also exempt from the previous CON requirement that they meet the regional average for charity care as determined by the Secretary of Health.