

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6239

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, January 31, 1996  
Ways & Means, February 6, 1996

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

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

**Sponsors:** 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 & Long-Term Care: 1/23/96, 1/31/96 [DPA].  
Ways & Means: 2/5/96, 2/6/96 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

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

**Staff:** Wendy Saunders (786-7439)

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6239 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rinehart, Chair; Loveland, Vice Chair; Bauer, Cantu, Drew, Finkbeiner, Fraser, Hargrove, Hochstatter, Johnson, Kohl, Long, McDonald, Pelz, Quigley, Roach, Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Sutherland, Winsley and Wojahn.

**Staff:** Susan Lucas (786-7711)

**Background:** Osteoporosis is a devastating disease, which causes a thinning of the bones and often leads to severe fractures. These fractures cause pain, disability, immobility and threaten the independence of the twenty-five million Americans that suffer from the disease.

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

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

Since 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 Substitute Bill:** The Department of Health is required to establish a statewide osteoporosis prevention and treatment education program. The program promotes 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 provides a variety of services including: information and referral, educational materials, training, media outreach, community forums, support groups and risk assessment at public events. It is also required to evaluate and expand access to community-based services.

The Governor may appoint an interagency council on osteoporosis. The department is responsible for coordinating and developing programs, information sharing, and reporting and making recommendations to the Legislature on osteoporosis educational initiatives. The department is also required to establish an advisory panel to provide nongovernmental input on the osteoporosis prevention and treatment education program.

The department is given the authority to accept grants, services and property and to seek federal waivers to maximize federal funds for the program.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The Governor's mandate to appoint an interagency council on osteoporosis is changed to provide the Governor with the discretion to appoint a council. The duties of the council are transferred to the Department of Health. The section containing an unspecified appropriation is deleted.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 5, 1996.

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

**Testimony For (Health & Long-Term Care):** There is little public awareness about the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis. Osteoporosis affects 50 percent of women and 20 percent of men. The bill is cost effective because it will decrease the prevalence of osteoporosis by raising awareness about risk factors and prevention.

**Testimony Against (Health & Long-Term Care):** It is preferable to include osteoporosis in the overall framework of health promotion. There is concern about highlighting one disease.

**Testified (Health & Long-Term Care):** Dr. Mark Leighton, physician; Laurine Orning, Mark Pruitt, patients; Dr. Mimi Fields, Department of Health.

**Testimony For (Ways & Means):** The fiscal note for the bill is very high. There are existing programs in many states supported by the Older Women's League. These programs are supported for between \$50,000 and \$250,000 per year. Osteoporosis will affect 50 percent of post-menopausal women. The public health cost of this disease was \$20 billion in 1990 and it will continue to increase.

**Testimony Against (Ways & Means):** None.

**Testified (Ways & Means):** Linda Hull, Merck.