

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2366

As Reported By House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to providing infectious disease testing for good samaritans.

Brief Description: Providing free infectious disease testing to good samaritans.

Sponsors: Representatives Carlson, Pennington, Radcliff, Mielke, Mulliken, Boldt, Gardner, Sheahan, Bush, Anderson, Mitchell, Dyer, Schoesler and McDonald.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 1/20/98, 2/3/98 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Dyer, Chairman; Backlund, Vice Chairman; Skinner, Vice Chairman; Cody, Ranking Minority Member; Murray, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson; Conway; Parlette; Sherstad; Wood and Zellinsky.

Staff: Bill Hagens (786-7131).

Background: Current law [RCW 4.24.300] provides persons (commonly referred to as "good samaritans") who provide emergency assistance or transportation without compensation certain immunity from liability.

Proponents of this measure believe that such emergency assistance frequently involves mouth to mouth resuscitation or other emergency medical procedures that could result in the exchange of bodily fluids exposing the good samaritan to serious infectious diseases, e.g., hepatitis, tuberculosis, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV); further, that a number of good samaritans may be unable to pay for the testing necessary for detecting infectious diseases.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Any good samaritan who comes in contact with bodily fluids while rendering emergency assistance shall be permitted to have infectious disease testing provided by a local public health department free of charge, if her or his health

insurance does not cover such test. The Department of Health shall adopt rules to implement these provisions.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Categories of diseases, eligibility, and local health department responsibilities are clarified.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: This bill removes a concern of good samaritans.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Carlson, prime sponsor; Richard Curtis, city of Vancouver Fire Department (pro); and Susie Tracy, Washington State Medical Association (technical amendment).