

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 2465

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Law & Justice, February 25, 1998

Title: An act relating to health care providers' communication with patients.

Brief Description: Expanding the privileged communication from physician-patient to the health care provider and patient privilege.

Sponsors: Representatives Dyer, Cody, Backlund, L. Thomas and Cooke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 2/23/98, 2/25/98 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Johnson, Vice Chair; Fairley, Hargrove, Kline, Long, Stevens, Thibaudeau and Zarelli.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: Currently, a physician or osteopathic physician generally enjoys the physician-patient privilege whereby the physician may not be compelled in a civil action before a court of law to disclose information acquired from a patient which was necessary in treating the patient. This right of privileged or confidential communication, however, does not extend to other health providers.

Summary of Bill: The right of privileged or confidential communication is extended to podiatric physicians or surgeons. They may not be compelled to disclose in a civil action information acquired from a patient which was necessary to treat a patient.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Podiatrists were included in the privilege until osteopaths were specifically included. Exclusion of podiatrists was an unforeseen result. The bill fulfills patient expectations and facilitates patient cooperation.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Frank Morrison, WA State Podiatrist Association (pro).