

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1992

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to the emergency administration of epinephrine.

Brief Description: Allowing a certified emergency medical technician to administer epinephrine.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (Originally sponsored by Representatives Ballasiotes, Schual-Berke and Rockefeller).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/26/99, 3/2/99 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/10/99, 97-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 4/13/99, 46-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires a comprehensive review of the merits of allowing emergency medical technicians (EMTs) to administer a prepackaged dose of epinephrine.
- Allows the Department of Health to establish a pilot program to determine the effectiveness of training EMTs to administer epinephrine to persons under the age of 30.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Cody, Democratic Co-Chair; Parlette, Republican Co-Chair; Pflug, Republican Vice Chair; Alexander; Boldt; Campbell; Conway; Edmonds; Edwards; Mulliken and Ruderman.

Staff: Antonio Sanchez (786-7383).

Background:

Anaphylaxis is an allergic hypersensitivity reaction of the body to a foreign protein or drug. Anaphylaxis can be caused by drugs, insect stings, foods, and inhalants. A reaction may cause increased irritability, dyspnea, or cyanosis. In some cases it can result in convulsions, unconsciousness, and even death.

Epinephrine is used to treat anaphylactic reactions. Those with severe allergies that could result in an anaphylactic reaction may receive a prescription to administer a dose of epinephrine through the use of an autoinjector device. Presently, paramedics and intermediate life support technicians may administer epinephrine. EMTs, however, may only administer epinephrine to patients who have a prescription for epinephrine for allergic reactions.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Health (DOH) in cooperation with the House of Representatives Health Care Committee is required to review the use of epinephrine for anaphylaxis by EMTs and determine the number of incidents of anaphylaxis statewide, the training costs associated with establishing specialized training for EMTs to carry and administer epinephrine, and an assessment of the potential risks associated with the use of epinephrine.

The DOH is allowed to establish a pilot program to determine the effectiveness of training EMTs to carry and administer epinephrine to persons under the age of 30. The DOH is allowed to establish a volunteer advisory committee to assist with the development and review of the pilot program.

An emergency is declared for the purpose of when the bill takes effect.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S): Requires that emergency medical technicians carry epinephrine and are authorized to administer it upon the request of the patient or to other specified authorized individuals. Renames the act as the "Kristine Kastner Act". Specifies that emergency care personnel referred to as first responders are not authorized to administer epinephrine.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: (original bill) Allowing EMTs to carry lifesaving epinephrine will serve as necessary backup for individuals that find themselves without this medicine.

Testimony Against: If epinephrine is administered to someone who has certain cardiac problems it will cause a death. Only trained medical personnel should administer epinephrine.

Testified: (original bill) (support) Representative Ballasiotes, prime sponsor; Brian Neville, Food Education Allergy Support Team; Lorraine Gibbs; and Henry Gibbs.

(oppose) Mike Copass, self.