

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5590

As Reported By House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to which health professionals may sign a request to have oral medication administered by school employees.

Brief Description: Expanding the health professionals who may request administration of oral medication at school.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Thibaudeau, Deccio, Wojahn and Winsley; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/25/00 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Public and private school personnel may administer oral medications to students from prescriptions issued by any licensed health professional with prescriptive authority.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Cody, Democratic Co-Chair; Parlette, Republican Co-Chair; Pflug, Republican Vice Chair; Schual-Berke, Democratic Vice Chair; Alexander; Campbell; Conway; Edmonds; Edwards; Mulliken; Pennington and Ruderman.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background:

Public and private schools provide oral medications to students during the school day according to requirements set forth in federal and state law.

Schools administer oral medications to students upon the acquisition of such a request from parents, accompanied by instructions, with proper identification of the medication to be administered and a means for safekeeping the medication.

Under current state law, schools can only honor requests for oral medications if they come from a licensed physician or dentist.

There is an increasing number of school age children who receive prescriptions from physicians' assistants and advanced registered nurse practitioners. Current law does not allow for prescriptions written by these practitioners to be accepted in schools for the purposes of administering oral medications to students.

Summary of Bill:

Public and private schools may administer oral medications to students if the request for medication comes from any licensed health professional prescribing within the scope of their prescribing authority.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Current law is too narrow, recognizing the prescriptions of only physicians and dentists. Advanced registered nurse practitioners and physicians' assistants do have prescriptive authority for medications which are just as likely to be needed. Students would have better access to the oral medications which would enhance their learning capacity at school.

(Concerns) Additional prescriptive authority increases the burden on school personnel.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Thibaudeau, prime sponsor; Jeff Larsen, Washington Osteopathic Medical Association and Washington Academy of Physician Assistants; Ann Simonds, Association of School Nurses; Jerry Farley, Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners United; and Ken Bertrand, Group Health Cooperative.

(Concerns) Doug Nelson, Public School Employees.