

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6213

As Reported By House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to guidelines for emergency medical personnel when dealing with directives.

Brief Description: Requiring guidelines for the response of emergency medical personnel to directives.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Deccio and Winsley).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

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

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs the Department of Health to develop a simple form for persons who decline cardiopulmonary resuscitation to be recognized statewide by emergency medical personnel.

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:

The Department of Health was directed by law to adopt guidelines for emergency medical personnel when they respond to emergency situations involving patients who have signed forms by patients withholding consent for cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

State law presumes that an unconscious person would give consent for CPR in an emergency situation, and emergency medical personnel must provide CPR in the absence of any written directive signed by a patient withholding his or her consent.

A person who does not want to be resuscitated must sign a form constituting a written directive withholding such consent. The department guidelines provide a written form for persons who wish to withhold consent to be resuscitated. This form, which is signed by the patient and the patient's physician, is not being followed by emergency medical personnel in every county.

The guidelines do not exclude the use of other forms which can be used.

Summary of Bill:

The guidelines of the Department of Health must include the development of a simple form that must be used and recognized statewide by emergency medical personnel.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Some "do not resuscitate" forms are not being honored by emergency medical personnel in every county and there are a variety of forms which vary in content. There is a need for one official form which people can rely upon being honored in emergency situations.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Janet Griffith, EMS and Trauma, Department of Health.