

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1371

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to reporting, treatment, and payment for treatment of tuberculosis.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions that concern the control and prevention of tuberculosis.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (Originally sponsored by Representatives Ruderman, Alexander and O'Brien; by request of Department of Health).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/5/99, 2/25/99 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/5/99, 96-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 4/7/99, 45-0.

House Concurred.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Removes obsolete and redundant language from statute.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill 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; Boldt; Campbell; Conway; Edmonds; Edwards; Mulliken and Ruderman.

Staff: Bill Hagens (786-7131).

Background:

According to the Department of Health's (DOH) Annual Communicable Disease Report for 1997, tuberculosis (TB) has reemerged as a serious communicable disease, after years of decline in the number of TB cases reported annually in Washington and the United States. The numbers of cases reported annually in Washington declined from 713 in 1960 to 207 in 1984. Between 1984 and 1991, that number increased from 207 to 309 - a nearly 50 percent increase. Cases reported declined from 1991 through 1996. However, in 1997, the number of cases again increased. There were 305 reported cases 1997, an increase from the 285 cases reported in 1996.

The DOH and local health departments are responsible for protecting the public from the spread of TB, a highly infectious and potentially deadly disease. The current laws, spread over four chapters of the RCW, date back as far as 1899. Those laws authorize public health authorities to report and track cases of TB; to investigate suspected cases and conduct examinations; and to order treatment, isolation or quarantine. The current laws are crucial to the task of detecting and controlling the spread of TB. However, those laws also contain outdated language that requires revision to reflect current practices. The DOH proposes consolidating and updating the TB statutes to remove obsolete and outdated provisions and to reflect current clinical practices and treatment management.

Summary of Bill:

The bill revises and consolidates numerous sections of RCW while preserving the basic components for TB control and treatment. The major features are as follows:

- Conforms TB reporting requirements to current national communicable disease reporting standards.
- Repeals and amends numerous outdated provisions, such as, references to "state administered tuberculosis hospital facilities" which no longer exist.
- Recodifies the current four chapters of RCW into two chapters.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The bill is necessary to improve TB surveillance and treatment.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Dr. Maxine Hayes, Department of Health.