

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5604

As Reported By House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to health care facility worker identification.

Brief Description: Identifying health care facility workers.

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

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 4/2/99 [DPA].

<p>Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by House Committee)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Requires employees, health providers, volunteers, contractors and lessees to wear identification badges in health facilities.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Cody, Democratic Co-Chair; Parlette, Republican Co-Chair; Pflug, Republican Vice Chair; Schual-Berke, Democratic Vice Chair; Alexander; Conway; Edmonds and Ruderman.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Boldt; Campbell and Mulliken.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background:

There are no statutory requirements providing for the wearing of identification badges by health care facility workers or volunteers in the course of their employment.

Summary of Amended Bill:

All persons who are health care providers, staff, employees, contractors, and volunteers providing health care services at a health care facility are required to wear visible identification. Health facility includes a hospital, long-term care facility, mental health facility, and home health and hospice facility, but excludes a veterinary facility. Health facilities that maintain an established identification badge policy are exempted. The identification must display the individual's name or an identifying number as well as their professional title or job title. Health care facility administrators are responsible for assuring compliance.

Costs for identification badges are unallowable as to nursing facilities.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: Clinics and health providers' offices are deleted from the list of health facilities included in the bill, and the list is restricted to only those on the list. Health facilities having their own identification badge policies are also exempted from the bill. Section 2 was deleted in order to provide for reimbursement to nursing homes for the costs associated with identification badges as allowable costs under the federal Medicaid Program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Requiring health care facility employees to wear identification badges will inform patients as to who is providing their services, thereby enhancing consumer awareness.

Testimony Against: This is not necessary in physician's offices and clinics, and where facilities have their own identification policies.

Testified: (in support) Tamara Warnke, Washington State Nurses Association; and Ann Simons, United Food and Commercial Workers.

(support with amendment) Nick Federici, Washington Association of Housing and Services for the Aging; and Bill Sellars, The Arc of Washington.

(oppose) Carl Nelson, Washington State Medical Association; and Jeff Larsen, Washington State Residential Care Council.