

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5777

As Passed House:

April 8, 1999

Title: An act relating to payment for denturist services.

Brief Description: Addressing payment for denturist services.

Sponsors: Senators Prentice and Winsley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 4/1/99 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 4/8/99, 95-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires health care contractors to reimburse denturists for services provided to enrollees by making checks payable to both the denturist and the enrollee.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Cody, Democratic Co-Chair; Parlette, Republican Co-Chair; Pflug, Republican Vice Chair; Alexander; Campbell; Conway and Edmonds.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background:

Currently, in payment for certain health care services provided by a nonparticipating provider, a health care service contractor is required to make checks payable jointly to the provider and the enrolled participant unless the participant provides evidence of prepayment. This requirement applies to the following health care service providers: chiropractors, dental hygienists, dentists, optometrists, osteopaths, pharmacists, physicians, emergency care providers, physical therapists, psychologists, and certain nurses and nurse practitioners. Denturists are not included.

Summary of Bill:

In payment of services provided by a nonparticipating provider dentist, a health care service contractor must make checks payable jointly to the dentist and the enrolled participant, unless the participant provides evidence of prepayment. However, the health care service contractor may still issue payment in the name of the dentist only.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This statute was overlooked when the dentist initiative was passed. Because dentists are not paid through insurance, some patients may be required to prepay for denture services even when they have insurance. This may be hard on low income individuals or those on fixed incomes. This bill allows patients to get the full benefit of their insurance.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Steve Wehrly, Washington Dentist Association.