

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1992

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, April 1, 1999

**Title:** An act relating to the emergency administration of epinephrine.

**Brief Description:** Studying the need for emergency medical services personnel to be trained in the use of epinephrine.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Ballasiotes, Schual-Berke and Rockefeller).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 3/29/99, 4/1/99 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Costa, Deccio, Franklin, Johnson and Winsley.

**Staff:** Christopher Blake (786-7446)

**Background:** Anaphylaxis is an allergic hypersensitivity reaction of the body to a foreign protein or drug. Anaphylaxis can be caused by drugs, insect stings, foods, and inhalents. A reaction may cause increased irritability, dyspnea, or cyanosis. In some cases it can result in convulsions, unconsciousness, and even death. Last November a girl in Mercer Island died after having a severe allergic reaction to nuts in a cookie.

Epinephrine is used to treat anaphylactic reactions. Those with severe allergies that could result in an anaphylactic reaction may receive a prescription to administer a dose of epinephrine through the use of an autoinjector device. Presently, paramedics and intermediate life support technicians may administer epinephrine. Emergency medical technicians, however, may only administer epinephrine to patients who have a prescription for epinephrine for allergic reactions.

**Summary of Bill:** Legislative findings are made regarding the use of epinephrine to treat anaphylaxis. The Department of Health is instructed to conduct a review of the use of epinephrine by emergency medical technicians to treat anaphylaxis and report its findings to the Legislature. The department may conduct a pilot program to determine the effectiveness of training emergency medical technicians to carry and administer epinephrine.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Time is critical when an individual suffers a severe allergic reaction. Epinephrine is a drug that is simple to administer and can save lives.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Representative Ballasiotes, sponsor; Representative Schual-Berke, sponsor; Senator Finkbeiner; Janet Griffith, Department of Health; Susie Tracy, Washington State Medical Association.