

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5149

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As Passed Senate, March 12, 1999

**Title:** An act relating to the practice of occupational therapy.

**Brief Description:** Revising provisions relating to occupational therapy.

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

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 1/25/99, 2/17/99 [DPS].  
Passed Senate, 3/12/99, 38-0.

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

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5149 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

**Staff:** Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

**Background:** Occupational therapists want to update their licensing provisions, changing their name to occupational therapy practitioners, and increasing their referral sources from physicians and podiatrists to other kinds of providers.

Occupational therapists evaluate, treat, and consult in methods designed to assist people in overcoming limitations in work functions or daily activities.

**Summary of Bill:** Occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants are considered occupational therapy practitioners when the context applies to either therapists or assistants. Physicians, osteopathic physicians, podiatrists, surgeons, naturopaths, chiropractors, physician assistants, psychologists, and advanced registered nurse practitioners can refer patients to occupational therapists.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 22, 1999.

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

**Testimony For:** The changes bring licensing provisions into conformance with national standards for the profession.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Dr. Sylvia Kauffman, WA Occupational Therapy Association; Gail McGaffick, WA State Psychological Assn.