

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5934

As of February 25, 1999

Title: An act relating to naturopathic physicians.

Brief Description: Regulating naturopathic physicians.

Sponsors: Senators Thibaudeau and Roach.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/25/99.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

Background: Naturopathy is the practice of the art and science of the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of disorders of the body by stimulations or support, or both, of the natural processes of the human body.

In February of 1999, the Department of Health issued a Naturopathic Scope Sunrise Review pursuant to referral of HB 2286. The Department of Health recommended expansion of prescriptive authority to include legend drugs and controlled substances Schedules III-V with some limitations; revision to the definition of minor office procedures to include lesions, but not injections; injections should be addressed in a different section; naturopaths may employ persons to assist in colonic therapy.

Summary of Bill: The practice of naturopathy or naturopathic medicine is changed to include minor office procedures, radiography, and the prescription of naturopathic medicines.

Minor office procedures are expanded to include the excision of lesions, trigger point therapy, dermal stimulation, and allergy testing and treatment.

Radiography is defined as ordering, but not interpreting, radiographic and other imaging studies, including ultrasonic images.

Naturopathic medicines are defined to include the prescription of legend drugs and controlled substances Schedules III-V, vitamins, minerals, botanical medicines, homeopathic medicines, hormones, and other physiologic substances as exemplified in standard naturopathic medical texts and journals including nondrug contraceptive devices. Naturopathic physicians may administer injections appropriate to naturopathic medicine, including saline infusion for dehydrated patients. A naturopathic physician may compound, dispense, or sell naturopathic medicines not commonly available by prescription.

Naturopathic physicians may not employ the term "acupuncture" to describe any services they provide. The Department of Health is required to develop a work group that reports back to the Legislature areas of practice that should require an endorsement.

Naturopathic physicians may employ persons to assist in the preparation and monitoring of colonic therapy.

The Department of Health is given rulemaking authority.

Naturopaths are renamed naturopathic physicians and their practice is referred to as naturopathic medicine. Educational program is redefined as an accredited program preparing persons for the practice of naturopathic medicine.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 22, 1999.

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