

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6331

As Passed Senate, February 14, 2000

Title: An act relating to disclosure of health care information.

Brief Description: Regulating disclosure of health care information.

Sponsors: Senators Costa, Winsley, Thibaudeau, Fairley, Kohl-Welles and Gardner.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/24/2000, 2/2/2000 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/14/2000, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

Background: Medical personnel and others are relying upon fax machines and other computer and electronic equipment that store fax numbers for the communication of private and personal medical information, like lab test results, prescriptions, and treatment recommendations. Technology does not check to make sure the fax number is correct or current. It is not uncommon for medical records with individually identifiable sensitive medical history to be faxed to the wrong person or business.

Summary of Bill: Health care providers are required to take reasonable safeguards for the security of health care information by making sure fax number records are current, and confirming proper receipt of fax messages.

A negligent violation of the confidentiality statutes for sexually transmitted disease information is defined to include sending the protected information to an incorrect number when the sender should have know the number was wrong.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Citizens expect greater privacy regarding their medical records. Records with very intimate details have been improperly faxed with little response from medical providers to remedy the problem.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Kathy Ellis (pro).