

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6684

As of February 3, 2000

Title: An act relating to the privacy of medical records.

Brief Description: Protecting the privacy of medical records.

Sponsors: Senators Thibaudeau, Kline, Roach and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/3/2000.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

Background: Health care information is subject to a number of statutory provisions that limit the disclosure of the information by a health care provider without the express authorization of the patient. There are a number of exceptions to the consent requirement.

Summary of Bill: The statute preventing the disclosure of health care information without written authorization by a health care provider is expanded to prevent the disclosure of health care information by any person.

Health care providers are required to chart all disclosures, even to third party payors. Third party payors currently have an exception to the charting requirement.

Hospitals and health care providers are no longer allowed to disclose a patient's residence, condition, or diagnosis in cases reported by fire, police, sheriff, or other public authority.

Persons cannot disclose health care information to federal, state, or local health authorities in order to protect the public health. Current law allows such disclosure by health care providers.

County coroners and medical examiners cannot get health care information in death investigations without patient authorization unless the health care information was disclosed.

Existing language that provides a cause of action for violations of the chapter is expanded to allow recovery of \$1,000 or actual damages, whichever is greater for each violation, and injunctive relief.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

