

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1093

As Reported by House Committee On:

Health Care

Title: An act relating to increasing the license surcharge for the impaired physician program.

Brief Description: Changing physician license fees.

Sponsors: Representatives Schual-Berke, Ballasiotes, Cody, Campbell, Ruderman, Skinner, Conway, Edmonds, Kenney and Kagi.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 1/25/01, 2/13/01 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Raises the \$25 annual surcharge on physician licenses to no more than \$35 to fund the Impaired Physicians Program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Campbell, Republican Co-Chair; Cody, Democratic Co-Chair; Skinner, Republican Vice Chair; Alexander, Ballasiotes, Conway, Darneille, Edmonds, Edwards, Marine, McMorris, Pennington and Ruderman.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background:

A statutory surcharge of \$25 is added to a licensing fee or license renewal fee of physicians to finance the Impaired Physician Program. The Medical Quality Assurance Commission is required by law to enter into a contract with a professional entity which provides evaluation and treatment services to physicians impaired as a result of chemical abuse or mental illness to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety to their patients.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The statutory surcharge of \$25 for financing the Impaired Physician Program is raised to no more than \$35.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Annual inflationary increases in the surcharge is deleted. References to the license surcharge for physician assistants is also deleted.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Raises in the surcharge for funding the impaired physician program are necessary to provide needed services to impaired physicians.

Testimony Against: None against the substitute bill.

Testified: (In support) Carl Nelson, Washington State Medical Association; and Lynn Hankes, Washington Physicians Health Program.

(With concerns/original bill) Sue Shoblom, Department of Health; and Jeff Larsen, Washington Academy of Physician Assistants and Washington Osteopathic Medical Association.