

Health Care Committee

HB 1730

Brief Description: *Requiring certain health care providers to report gunshot or knife wounds to the authorities.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Schual-Berke, Skinner, Clements, Pennington, Kagi, Linville, Cody, Campbell, Lovick, Cox, Ruderman, Ballasiotes, O'Brien, Hunt, Edwards, Dickerson, Grant, Darneille and Keiser.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Physicians, nurses and hospitals treating gunshot or knife wounds are required to immediately notify the nearest law enforcement agency of the circumstances.*
- *Persons reporting gunshot or knife wounds are immune from civil liability.*

Hearing Date: *2/20/01*

Staff: *John Welsh (786-7133).*

Background:

Current law does not provide for immediate notification of law enforcement agencies by physicians or hospital emergency room attendants treating gunshot wounds to assist law enforcement if the circumstance is a result of illegal activity.

However, physicians are required to report to the Department of Health on a monthly basis gunshot wounds for data collection purposes relating to acts of violence, at-risk behaviors, and risk and protective factors. The data is used by the department in the development of a public health services improvement plan for use by local public health departments for assessment, performance measurement, and policy development to prevent health problems caused by criminal violence, suicide, substance abuse, child abuse, domestic violence and other high risk factors. Gunshot trauma is declared to be a significant public health problem which warrants mandatory reporting for purposes of monitoring, assessment, and the development of prevention strategies.

Summary of Bill:

A physician, nurse, or hospital attendant treating a person with a gunshot or knife wound must immediately notify the nearest law enforcement agency of the circumstances, including the name and description of the patient, and the character of the wound.

The person making the report in good faith is immune from civil liability.

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Not Requested.*

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