

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HCR 4422

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care

Brief Description: Establishing the health care work force commission.

Sponsors: Representatives Schual-Berke, Campbell, Cody, Skinner, Benson, Jackley and Haigh.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 1/29/02, 2/7/02 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Establishes a Health Work Force Commission to develop a strategic plan for addressing shortages of health care personnel in the state.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Schual-Berke, Vice Chair; Campbell, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Benson, Conway, Darneille, Edwards, Ruderman and Skinner.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Ballasiotes.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background:

There is evidence of a present and growing shortage of health care providers, with some in critically short supply, that is threatening public access to even basic health care services as well as medical specialties.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

There is a legislative declaration that Washington State is facing a growing public health

crisis because of a shortage of health care personnel that threatens the ability of residents to continue to obtain quality and accessible health care.

A Health Care Personnel Task Force is established at the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board with a maximum of 20 members. Members include two members of the House of Representatives and Senate respectively, and members appointed by the Governor representing hospitals, public hospital districts, nurses, physicians, dentists, allied health professionals, long-term care providers, community and migrant health centers, organized labor, and a public member as chair. In addition, representatives of the Department of Health, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, Higher Education Coordinating Board, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Board of Health shall be members.

The board, within available funds, may hire staff, appoint technical advisory committees, and contract for professional assistance. The Senate and House of Representatives and state agencies may supply additional staff support. The task force shall have access to health care personnel data and work force information requested of state agencies.

The task force shall develop a state strategic plan for ensuring an adequate supply of health personnel to safeguard the provision of quality and accessible health care to state residents. The plan shall identify ways to increase the capacity of training programs with student recruitment; recommend changes to streamline entry into practice and overcome barriers to practice environments; recommend ways of increasing diversity of health professions; identify funding mechanisms to implement the task force's recommendations and seek contributions from professional associations and institutions.

The task force must submit an interim report to the Governor and Legislature by December 31, 2002, and a final report by December 31, 2003, the date of the task force's expiration.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Independent commission is changed to a Health Care Personnel Task Force under the auspices of the state Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; members are added representing dentists, allied health professionals with documented shortages; community/migrant health centers and the Board of Health; per diem/travel authorization is stricken; operations are within available funds; and contributions from professional associations and institutions are authorized.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Testimony For: There is a growing shortage of health care providers, some in critically short supply, including medical specialties, and public access to health care services is eroding. A study is needed to address this important problem.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (Support) Patty Hayes, Department of Health; Craig McLaughlin, State Board of Health; and Lisa Thatcher, Washington State Hospital Association.

(Support with amendment) Jacqueline Barrett-Sharar.

(Comments) Bryan Wilson, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.