

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESHB 1371

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Ways & Means, April 2, 2001

**Title:** An act relating to participation in health care authority insurance plans and contracts by surviving spouses and dependent children of emergency service personnel killed in the line of duty.

**Brief Description:** Allowing participation in health care authority insurance plans and contracts by surviving spouses and dependent children of emergency service personnel killed in the line of duty.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Morell, O'Brien, Woods, Bush, Cooper, Haigh, Simpson, Armstrong, Ahern, Lovick, Marine, Anderson, Pearson, Benson, Keiser, Conway, Hurst, Santos and Campbell).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Ways & Means: 3/21/01, 4/2/01 [DPA].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Brown, Chair; Constantine, Vice Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Fraser, Hewitt, Honeyford, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Long, Parlette, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rossi, Sheahan, B. Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Winsley and Zarelli.

**Staff:** Pete Cutler (786-7454)

**Background:** Retired or disabled employees of the state, school districts, and participating political subdivisions may purchase health care benefits from the Public Employees' Benefits Board. This coverage is purchased at full cost based on a risk pool, and it includes an additional administrative fee for each participant. Participants eligible for Medicare parts A and B are placed in one risk pool. All other retired or disabled participants are placed in a risk pool with active employees. Both groups are charged based on the per capita costs incurred by the appropriate risk pool, minus a subsidy in the case of Medicare eligible participants.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** Surviving spouses and children of emergency service personnel killed in the line of duty since January 1, 1998, may purchase health care benefits from the Public Employees' Benefits Board. "Emergency service personnel" means members of the Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Retirement System and members of the Volunteer Fire Fighters' and Reserve Officers' Relief and Pensions System.

**Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:** As amended by the Ways and Means Committee, the changes made by the bill apply to surviving spouses and dependent children

of emergency service personnel killed in the line of duty on or after January 1, 1998. The original bill applied only to the survivors of personnel killed on or after January 1, 2001.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, except section 2, which takes effect March 1, 2002.

**Testimony For:** These surviving spouses and dependent children deserve to have access to affordable health care. Some smaller local governments cannot afford to provide the continued coverage.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Representative Dave Morell; Senator Julia Patterson; Gayle Fink Schulz, Dick Corchran, WA State Concerns of Police Survivors; Mike Matson, WA State Law Enforcement Association; Commander Kevin Tucker, Des Moines Police Department; Gary Edwards, Thurston County Sheriff.