SENATE BILL REPORT
SB 5446

As of February 19, 2001

Title: An act relating to health care coverage for retired or disabled school employees and retired state employees.

Brief Description: Providing health care coverage for retired or disabled school employees and retired state employees.

Sponsors: Senators Eide, Zarelli, Kohl-Welles and McAuliffe.

Brief History:
   Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/20/01.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Jonathan Seib (786-7427)

Background: Retired or disabled school district, education service district, or state employees generally have access to health care benefits through plans offered by the Public Employee Benefits Board (PEBB) through the state Health Care Authority. Enrollment periods for these employees are established in statute and by administrative rule. Those who failed to join a plan within their initial enrollment period are currently locked out of the program. This is true even where there was good cause for not joining.

Summary of Bill: Retired or disabled school district and educational service district employees, or retired state employees, who are receiving a state retirement allowance as of September 30, 1993, and their dependents may purchase health care insurance coverage from the Health Care Authority.

Retired or disabled school district and education service district employees, or retired state employees, who began receiving a retirement allowance on or after October 1, 1993, may enroll in health benefit plans under the Health Care Authority during annual enrollment periods established by the board, with demonstrated continuous employer group medical coverage from the time they became retired or disabled.

The authority must charge as premiums the cost of providing the insurance coverage, reduced by the amount of any existing subsidy.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2002.