
SUBSTITUTE SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 8408

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen, Parlette, Thibaudeau, Fairley, B. Sheldon, Fraser, Prentice, Gardner, Rasmussen and Kohl-Welles)

Read first time 03/05/2001. Referred to Committee on .

1 WHEREAS, The availability and affordability of quality health care
2 is of critical importance to the well-being of Washington residents;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, After remaining stable for several years, the cost of
5 health care is increasing at a disproportionately high rate; and

6 WHEREAS, These increasing costs are placing quality care beyond the
7 reach of a growing number of Washington citizens, and contributing to
8 health care expenditures that strain the resources of individuals,
9 businesses, and public programs; and

10 WHEREAS, Efforts by public and private purchasers to control
11 expenditures, and the strain these efforts place on the stability of
12 the health care work force and viability of health care facilities,
13 threaten to reduce access to quality care for all residents of the
14 state;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the House of Representatives of
16 the state of Washington, the Senate concurring, That a blue ribbon
17 commission on health care cost and access be established. The
18 commission will consist of the following eleven members:

19 (1) Four members from the House of Representatives, to include one
20 member of each party caucus from the Health Care Committee, and one

1 other member of each party caucus from the Appropriations Committee, to
2 be appointed by the Co-Speakers of the House of Representatives;

3 (2) Four members from the Senate, to include one member of each
4 party caucus from the Health and Long-Term Care Committee, and one
5 other member of each party caucus from the Ways and Means Committee, to
6 be appointed by the President of the Senate;

7 (3) The Insurance Commissioner; and

8 (4) Two members appointed by the Governor, one of whom the Governor
9 shall designate as the chair; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That consistent with funds appropriated
11 specifically for this purpose, the commission may hire staff or
12 contract for professional assistance. State agencies, the Senate, and
13 the House of Representatives may provide staff support upon request of
14 the commission. The commission shall establish ad hoc technical
15 advisory committees as appropriate, to include representatives of
16 business, employee organizations, health care providers, drug
17 manufacturers, public health officials, health carriers, state
18 agencies, health policy experts, consumer organizations, the general
19 public, and any others with an interest in or expertise regarding the
20 work of the commission. The commission may reimburse committee members
21 for related travel expenses; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That in the conduct of its business, the
23 commission shall have access to all health-related data available to
24 state agencies by statute. The head of each agency shall provide the
25 commission with all requested data or other relevant information
26 maintained by the agency in a timely and easy-to-comprehend manner; and

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That members of the commission shall
28 receive no compensation for their service, except that travel expenses
29 shall be reimbursed, from whatever funds are made available to the
30 commission, pursuant to RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060, and for members of
31 the legislature appointed to the commission, travel expenses shall be
32 reimbursed pursuant to RCW 44.04.120; and

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the commission shall:

34 (1) Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the health care financing
35 and delivery system in this state, including, among other things, the
36 adequacy and stability of the work force, the financial viability of
37 health care facilities, and the extent to which public programs and
38 private insurers do, and will continue to, provide access to all

1 residents of the state to necessary, appropriate, cost-effective, and
2 quality health care;

3 (2) Evaluate alternatives to address the problems identified in the
4 comprehensive assessment, including, among other things, modifying the
5 structure, administration and funding of state programs, changing state
6 insurance regulations, changing the way the state educates and
7 regulates health care professionals, changing the way the state
8 regulates health care facilities, and making better use of public and
9 private resources to prevent disease and injury or otherwise reduce the
10 need and demand for costly health care services; and

11 (3) Recommend specific actions to be taken by state agencies, the
12 legislature, and others to implement the preferred alternatives in
13 order to assure the long-term stability of the state's health care
14 system and the on-going access of all Washington residents to adequate
15 and affordable health care services; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the commission shall submit an initial
17 report to the legislature and the Governor on or before December 1,
18 2001; shall submit recommendations to the legislature and the Governor
19 on or before December 1, 2002; and shall submit a final report to the
20 legislature and the Governor on or before December 1, 2003. The
21 commission shall cease to exist on December 1, 2003.

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