
Health Care Committee

ESSB 5305

Brief Description: Prohibiting vaccinating pregnant women and children with mercury-containing vaccines.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Rasmussen, Benton, Roach, Swecker, Zarelli, Regala, Stevens, Shin, Delvin, Franklin and Mulliken).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Prohibits the vaccination of a person who is pregnant or under three years of age with a mercury-containing vaccine that does not meet federal licensing requirements.

Hearing Date: 2/16/06

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

Until 1999, thimerosal was frequently used in some vaccines as a preservative to prevent bacterial contamination, including vaccines for infants to protect against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, Haemophilus influenzae type b, and Hepatitis B. Thimerosal consists, in part, of a type of mercury called ethyl mercury. In 1999, the Public Health Service agencies and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended that thimerosal be removed from vaccines as a precautionary measure. According to the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, all routinely recommended licensed vaccines currently manufactured for children, except for some influenza vaccines, contain either no thimerosal or only trace amounts of thimerosal.

Summary of Bill:

Beginning July 1, 2006, a person who is pregnant or under three years of age may not be vaccinated with a mercury-containing vaccine or injected with a mercury-containing product that does not meet Food and Drug Administration vaccine licensing requirements.

The Secretary of Health may suspend the prohibition against mercury-containing vaccines and products upon declaration of a public health emergency.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.