

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5064

PARTIAL VETO

C 261 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Studying the use of electronic medical records.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Thibaudeau, Deccio, Jacobsen, Parlette, Kohl-Welles, Weinstein and Keiser).

Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

House Committee on Technology, Energy & Communications

House Committee on Appropriations

Background: Electronic medical record systems provide real-time access to patient medical records at the point of treatment and often include other functions that allow users to enter orders for tests and medications. These systems may provide a means to ensure that patients' medical records are up to date and to reinforce best practices and clinical guidelines, potentially reducing the risk of medical errors. They may also be used to reduce paperwork, and streamline administrative and billing transactions.

The State Health Care Authority (HCA) is the state agency which administers state employee insurance benefits and the Basic Health Plan (BHP), which is the state subsidized health insurance program for low income persons. The HCA is also generally responsible for coordinating the study and implementation of state initiatives regarding health care cost containment.

Summary: A Washington "health information infrastructure advisory board," composed of seven to twelve members, is created. The Health Care Authority must appoint the chair and the members of the board, which will include representatives of the provider community, including hospitals, information technology experts, health care policy experts, consumers, a representative from the Department of Information Services, a health plan representative, and the agency medical directors group.

The Health Care Authority and the advisory board will develop and implement a strategy for the adoption and use of electronic medical records and health information systems that are consistent with national standards and promote interoperability. The strategy should be informed by best research practices, should seek to encourage greater adoption, and should seek to promote standards and systems that are compatible with current adopters of electronic medical records in Washington. The Health Care Authority also will provide policy recommendations to remove obstacles to the implementation of the necessary infrastructure and must identify ways that state programs can employ incentives that encourage providers to adopt and use health information technologies.

An interim status report on the preliminary findings is due by December 1, 2005, and the final report of findings and recommendations must be submitted by December 1, 2006, which is the date of expiration for the act.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	45	1	
House	98	0	(House amended)
Senate	38	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 24, 2005

Partial Veto Summary: The directive requiring all agencies under the control of the Governor to render full assistance to the Washington Health Infrastructure Advisory board is removed.