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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1282**

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**State of Washington**

**59th Legislature**

**2005 Regular Session**

**By** House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Schual-Berke, Tom, Cody, Jarrett, Fromhold, Hankins, Appleton, Haler, Murray, Nixon, Dickerson, Kagi, Hasegawa, Roberts, Springer, DeBolt, Lantz, Chase, Hunter, Upthegrove, Darneille, Moeller, Morrell, Hunt, Simpson, Williams, Green, Wood, Kenney, Wallace, Linville, Ormsby, Kilmer, Haigh, Santos, McIntire and Walsh)

READ FIRST TIME 02/15/05.

1       AN ACT Relating to sexual health education; adding a new section to  
2 chapter 70.24 RCW; and creating new sections.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that it is a public  
5 health priority for young people to acquire the knowledge and skills  
6 necessary to make responsible, fully informed decisions about their  
7 sexual health. The legislature also finds that recent declines in the  
8 rate of pregnancies and some sexually transmitted diseases can be  
9 associated with the success of comprehensive, medically accurate, and  
10 age-appropriate sexual health education. Despite these gains, youth in  
11 Washington are confronted by the realities of high rates of teenage  
12 pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection.  
13 These preventable diseases can have lifelong consequences, including  
14 infertility and HPV-associated cancer, and are frequently asymptomatic,  
15 creating a silent epidemic among youth in our state. The state has a  
16 duty to ensure that young people are equipped with the comprehensive,  
17 medically accurate, age-appropriate information that they need to  
18 protect themselves from unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted  
19 diseases, including HIV infection. The best approach to protecting

1 youth in this environment is to support the resources that they trust  
2 and to ensure that young people have as much accurate, objective  
3 information about sexual health as possible.

4 Young people rely upon many educational resources for obtaining  
5 information about sexual health. The cornerstone of this education is  
6 at home with parents and guardians. These responsibilities also extend  
7 to schools, peers, religious organizations, and other community groups.  
8 These entities must work together to equip young people with the sexual  
9 health information that they will need to make responsible decisions  
10 throughout their lives. This information must emphasize the  
11 effectiveness of abstinence from sexual activities as well as the wide  
12 range of other methods for preventing teenage pregnancy and sexually  
13 transmitted diseases, including HIV infection. In addition, sexual  
14 health instruction and materials must be age-appropriate and  
15 appropriate for use with students of all races, genders, sexual  
16 orientations, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds and students with  
17 disabilities.

18 The standards offered by the January 2005 guidelines for sexual  
19 health information and disease prevention of the department of health  
20 and the office of the superintendent of public instruction are a  
21 fundamental tool when designing sexual health education. These  
22 guidelines will be used to inform teachers, guest speakers, and school  
23 districts to design of evidence-based sexual health education and may  
24 also be helpful to guide health and counseling providers, community  
25 groups, and parents and guardians to better meet the needs of the  
26 communities that they serve.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 70.24 RCW  
28 to read as follows:

29 (1) By September 1, 2006, every school district that offers sexual  
30 health education must assure that sexual health education is consistent  
31 with the January 2005 guidelines for sexual health information and  
32 disease prevention of the department of health and the office of the  
33 superintendent of public instruction. Every school district that  
34 offers sexual health education must emphasize abstinence, as required  
35 by RCW 70.24.210, except that abstinence may not be taught to the  
36 exclusion of other methods of preventing teenage pregnancy and sexually  
37 transmitted diseases, including HIV infection.

1 (2) Upon adoption of this section, sexual health education must  
2 provide medically accurate instruction and materials. The department  
3 of health shall make available information that can assist teachers,  
4 guest speakers, and school districts in achieving medical accuracy.

5 (3) Within available resources, the superintendent of public  
6 instruction and the department of health shall make the January 2005  
7 guidelines for sexual health information and disease prevention and any  
8 related model policies, curricula, or other technical assistance  
9 resources available to teachers, health and counseling providers,  
10 community groups, and parents and guardians.

11 (4) The department may adopt such rules as are necessary to  
12 establish what constitutes a comprehensive sexual health education  
13 curriculum, including a determination of pertinent medically accurate  
14 information based upon empirical evidence derived from peer-reviewed  
15 research or in reviewed government research reports.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act may be known and cited as the  
17 healthy youth act of 2005.

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