

**HB 1441-S2.E - DIGEST**

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Declares an intent that all children in the state of Washington have health care coverage by 2010. This should be accomplished by building upon and strengthening the successes of employer-sponsored health insurance coverage, other sources of private coverage, and publicly supported children's health insurance programs in Washington state. Access to coverage should be streamlined and efficient, with reductions in unnecessary administrative costs and mechanisms to expeditiously link children with a medical home.

Finds that the children's health program is a more appropriate mechanism for providing health services to poor children who are not otherwise eligible for medical assistance than grants to community clinics to offset uncompensated care or coverage through the Washington basic health plan.

Provides that enrollment in the children's health program shall not result in expenditures that exceed the amount that has been appropriated for the program in the operating budget. If it appears that continued enrollment will result in expenditures exceeding the appropriated level for a particular fiscal year, the department may freeze new enrollment in the program for that year.

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 1441-S2

May 4, 2005

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,  
The House of Representatives of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning, without my approval as to Section 3, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 1441 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to health insurance coverage for children;"

This bill reinstates the Children's Health Program for children up to 100 percent of the federal poverty level who are not otherwise eligible for Medicaid. Section 3 of the bill, the emergency clause that contains the effective date of July 1, 2005, is not needed for funding purposes and could set unreasonable expectations regarding the timing of implementation. The Department of Social and Health Services' (the "Department") operating budget appropriation for 2005-07 becomes effective on July 1, 2005. The Department estimates it will take six months to make the systems changes necessary to start enrolling children in this program by January 2006. I do not want to create false expectation that the Department will start enrolling children on July 1, 2005.

For these reasons I have vetoed Section 3 of Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 1441.

With the exception of Section 3, Engrossed Second Substitute House

Bill No. 1441 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christine O. Gregoire  
Governor