

SENATE BILL REPORT

SCR 8401

As of February 12, 2013

Brief Description: Creating a joint select committee on health care oversight.

Sponsors: Senators Keiser, Becker, Frockt, Dammeier and Schlicher.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health Care: 2/11/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Staff: Kathleen Buchli (786-7488)

Background: Several state agencies have a role in implementing health care policy in this state. Among them are the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC), the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), and the Health Care Authority (HCA). Another part of the state's health care policy is the newly created Health Benefit Exchange (HBE), which was established by an act of legislation as a public-private partnership to be separate and distinct from the state. These agencies and the HBE are not mandated to coordinate their activities.

Summary of Bill: A Joint Select Committee on Health Care Oversight (Committee) is established. The Committee's membership will consist of the chairs of the Health Care Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, who will serve as co-chairs. Additionally, four members of the Senate and four members of the House of Representatives will be appointed, two each by each of the largest political parties in each body. The Governor may appoint a nonvoting member as a liaison to the Committee.

The Committee is to provide oversight between the HCA, HBE, OIC, DOH, and DSHS. This oversight must include monitoring of each agency's activities to ensure they are not duplicating their efforts and are working towards a goal of increased quality of service which will then lead to reduced costs to the health care consumer. The Committee must coordinate with the Research and Analysis Division of DSHS to monitor health care cost trends.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: Yes.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill is a bipartisan effort to provide oversight of health care reform implementation. It will provide good governance and oversight of the various agencies involved. All these agencies are independent, but the Legislature does have budget authority over these agencies and should have some oversight of their activities. This is a terrific opportunity for bipartisan oversight of the complicated implementation of health care reform addressed by these agencies.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Keiser, prime sponsor; Mel Sorensen, America's Health Insurance Plans, Health Underwriters, National Assn. of Insurance and Financial Advisors.