

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 2693

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As of February 19, 1996

**Title:** An act relating to determination of benefits for permanent partial disability by industrial insurance self-insurers.

**Brief Description:** Providing for industrial insurance self-insurers to determine benefits for permanent disability.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Representatives McMorris, Romero, Mastin, Sheahan, Chappell and Thompson).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Labor, Commerce & Trade: 2/20/96.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & TRADE

**Staff:** Jack Brummel (786-7428)

**Background:** The Department of Labor and Industries is responsible for making all determinations of permanent disabilities in industrial insurance claims, whether the injured worker is covered by the state fund or a self-insured employer.

Self-insurers are authorized to close only those claims that do not involve permanent disabilities and meet other criteria established by statute. The self-insurer must request that the department close other claims.

**Summary of Bill:** Self-insured employers are authorized to make determinations of permanent partial disability for undisputed claims they accept after June 30, 1996, that involve only medical treatment and/or time loss payments, and involve a worker who has returned to work with the self-insured employer of record at his or her previous job or a job with comparable wages and benefits. The worker may request a determination, or the self-insurer may initiate a determination. The self-insurer may either enter a written order communicated to the worker and the Department of Labor and Industries or request that the department issue an order.

Upon closing one of these claims, the self-insurer must notify the department and the worker in writing that the claim is being closed with medical benefits, and/or time loss compensation, and an award for permanent partial disability as applicable. The notice to the worker must include information about the worker's right to protest the closure.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.