

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5038

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As Passed Senate, January 25, 1995

**Title:** An act relating to modifying time periods for adoption of health benefits and standards.

**Brief Description:** Extending time periods for certain health care reform activities.

**Sponsors:** Senator Quigley.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 1/17/95, 1/19/95 [DP].  
Passed Senate, 1/25/95, 49-0.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Quigley, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; C. Anderson, Deccio, Fairley, Franklin, Moyer, Winsley and Wood.

**Staff:** Don Sloma (786-7319)

**Background:** Under current law, after July 1, 1995, the Insurance Commissioner must certify that any insuring entity who wishes to offer health insurance meets a new set of requirements known as certified health plan standards. After that date, no one may provide health insurance without first being so certified. In addition, after July 1, 1995, no insuring entity, including any certified health plan, may offer health insurance that is less than the uniform benefits package. After July 1, 1995, the state's Basic Health Plan must contract with certified health plans.

The uniform benefits package is a set of health services generally described in state law as being the benefit and actuarial equivalent of the Basic Health Plan with several additions. State law requires that the Health Services Commission submit draft rules to the Legislature by December 1, 1994, which contain a specific schedule of services to be included in the uniform benefits package.

The Legislature may disapprove of the uniform benefits package by an act of law at any time prior to the 30th day of the current legislative session. If disapproval occurs, the commission must resubmit a modified benefits package within 15 days of the disapproval. If the Legislature does not disapprove or modify the package by an act of law by the end of the regular session, the package is approved.

**Summary of Bill:** The date by which health insurance entities must be certified as certified health plans is moved from July 1, 1995 to December 31, 1995.

The requirement that the Legislature must disapprove by an act of law the Health Services Commission's draft rules describing the uniform benefits package is moved from the 30th day of this legislative session to the last day of the regular session.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 9, 1995.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For:** The bill is needed to provide more time for careful legislative review of the uniform benefits package and more time for orderly implementation of certified health plan standards.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Pam MacEwan, Health Services Commission; Mel Sorensen, Washington Physician's Service; Basil Badley, HIAA; Lincoln Ferris, Services Group of America; Susan Duval; Carolyn Logue, NFIB; Diane Stollenwerk Koecker, Sisters of Providence Health System; Carol Monohon, AWB; Gary Smith, IBA.