

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5778

As of February 19, 1999

Title: An act relating to creating an emergency response fund for outbreaks of communicable disease and tuberculosis detention.

Brief Description: Providing funds to help local health jurisdictions with costs associated with communicable disease outbreaks and tuberculosis detentions.

Sponsors: Senators Thibaudeau, Deccio, Wojahn, Winsley, Franklin, Costa, Brown, West and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/22/99.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Christopher Blake (786-7446)

Background: Tuberculosis is a life threatening airborne disease that can be casually transmitted without significant interaction. Health officers and tuberculosis control officers in Washington may require the quarantine, treatment, or isolation of an individual with tuberculosis if necessary for the protection and preservation of public health.

The costs associated with detention and other extraordinary control measures for individuals with tuberculosis are provided for out of general county funds. A recent study found that the average cost of detention is \$35,000. It is estimated that counties in Washington spend a combined \$5 million every year on tuberculosis control. Some feel that a statewide account is needed to reimburse counties incurring extraordinary expenses as a result of unanticipated, expensive disease control measures.

Summary of Bill: Legislative findings are made. The Communicable Disease/Tuberculosis Detention Emergency Account is created. The account is only to be used to assist local health jurisdictions in paying for the extraordinary costs associated with outbreaks or detentions related to communicable diseases or tuberculosis. The Secretary of Health may withdraw funds from the account according to specified statutory criteria. The Department of Health may adopt rules regarding the disbursement of funds in consultation with local health jurisdictions.

Local health jurisdictions that obtain money from the account must submit a report of their expenditures to the Department of Health.

\$600,000 is appropriated to the account for each of the next two years.

Appropriation: Biennial appropriation of \$1,200,000.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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