

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2690

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to emergency care for victims of sexual assault.

Brief Description: Providing emergency contraception to sexual assault victims.

Sponsors: Representatives Schual-Berke, Cody, Kirby, Upthegrove, Tokuda, Chase, Nixon, Hankins, Ogden, Hunt, Romero, Santos, Lantz, Lysen, Darneille, Simpson, Rockefeller, Kagi, McDermott and Ruderman.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/5/02, 2/7/02 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Hospitals are required to provide victims of sexual assault with information about emergency contraception, inform them of their option to receive it, and if not contraindicated, immediately provide it, if requested.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Schual-Berke, Vice Chair; Campbell, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Ballasiotes, Conway, Darneille, Edwards, Ruderman and Skinner.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Benson.

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146).

Background:

When victims of sexual assault are treated in hospital emergency rooms, there is no requirement that they be notified of the availability of emergency contraception. There is also no statutory requirement that hospitals provide emergency contraception, if requested by the victim of a sexual assault.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Every hospital providing emergency care to a victim of sexual assault is required to inform the person about emergency contraception, and their right to receive it. Unless it is contraindicated, the hospital is required to provide emergency contraception, if requested by the victim of a sexual assault. The secretary of the Department of Health is required to develop informational material on emergency contraception and disseminate it to every emergency room in the state. The Department of Health is required to respond to complaints of violations of the statute related to the use of emergency contraception. The department of health will establish an advisory committee to monitor compliance with the statutory requirements related to the use of emergency contraception.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The definition of "emergency contraception" is modified to remove reference to IUDs. The requirement that a task force assist the Department of Health in monitoring the act's implementation is removed.

Appropriation: None.**Fiscal Note:** Not Requested.**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.**Testimony For:** Victims of sexual assault should have access to emergency contraception when they are treated in hospital emergency rooms.**Testimony Against:** Catholic hospitals should not be forced to provide services they are opposed to on moral grounds.**Testified:** (Support) Christi Hurt, Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs; Nancy Young; and unidentified victim.

(With concerns) Kevin Glacken-Coley, Dr. Paul Hildenbrand, and Sister Ann McNamara, Washington State Catholic Conference.