

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6494

As Passed House:

March 2, 2004

Title: An act relating to prohibiting the use of social security numbers by health carriers and state health care programs.

Brief Description: Preventing the use of complete social security numbers on health insurance cards.

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Parlette, Mulliken, Roach and Kline).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/19/04, 2/24/04 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/2/04, 95-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Prohibits health carriers from including an enrollee's social security number on their authorization card.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Bailey, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Benson, Clibborn, Darneille, Moeller and Rodne.

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146).

Background:

A health carrier typically issues to its enrollees a card which the enrollees must present to a treating provider to facilitate claims processing. There is concern that including a person's Social Security number on the card, as some carriers reportedly do, increases the risk of identity theft.

"Identity theft" refers to the unauthorized use of another person's personal identifying information to obtain credit, goods, services, money, or property.

Summary of Bill:

After December 31, 2005, a health carrier that issues a card identifying a person as an enrollee, and requires the person to present the card to providers for purposes of claims processing, may not display on the card an identification number that includes more than a four-digit portion of the person's complete Social Security number. This also applies to cards issued under the Basic Health Plan or Medical Assistance Administration.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Identity theft is a serious and growing problem. Social security numbers should not be used on health carrier identification cards.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Rick Wickman, Premera.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.