

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6196

As Reported by House Committee On: Health Care

Title: An act relating to including a health official from a federally recognized tribe on the state board of health.

Brief Description: Including a health official from a federally recognized tribe on the state board of health.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Franklin, Regala, Keiser, Eide, Rockefeller, Prentice, Thibaudeau, Jacobsen, Fairley, McAuliffe, Fraser, Sheldon, Brown, Spanel, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Shin and Esser).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/21/06, 2/23/06 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by House Committee)

- Requires that one member of the State Board of Health be a health official from a federally recognized tribe.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Campbell, Vice Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Appleton, Clibborn, Green, Lantz, Moeller and Schual-Berke.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Hinkle, Ranking Minority Member; Curtis, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Condotta and Skinner.

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

The Washington State Board of Health (Board) is a constitutionally created forum for the development of public health policy. The Board is authorized to recommend to the Secretary of Health means for obtaining appropriate citizen and professional involvement in all public health policy formulation. While the Board does not have any enforcement authority, it is responsible for adopting rules on such topics as drinking water quality; control of health

hazards and nuisances related to waste disposal; disease prevention and control; cleanliness of facilities; and isolation and quarantine. In addition, the Board prepares a biennial state public health report that assesses the state's health status and outlines priority health goals.

The Board is composed of 10 members including the Secretary of Health (Secretary), four individuals with experience in matters of health and sanitation; an elected city official and an elected county official who are members of their local boards of health; a local health officer; and two consumer representatives. All of the members, other than the Secretary, are appointed by the Governor.

In 2004, the Legislature adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution 8419 which created the Joint Select Committee on Health Disparities (Committee). The Committee issued a report on health disparities in Washington on November 1, 2005. The report contained several recommendations and findings for the Legislature's consideration. Among the Committee's recommendations was that a member of the Board be designated to represent American Indian and Alaska Native populations.

Summary of Amended Bill:

One of the appointments to the Board that is reserved for a person with experience in matters of health and sanitation must be filled by a health official from a federally recognized tribe.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

Updates a reference to the Department of Social and Health Services relating to responsibilities that currently reside with the Department of Health.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Tribal governments are a vital part of the state's overall public health system. Having a tribal representative helps to ensure that the perspectives of the tribal public health system are part of the Board's deliberations. Tribes should have representation commensurate with other governmental jurisdictions in Washington that carry out health responsibilities. It is important to foster government-to-government relations on the Board.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Franklin, prime sponsor; Rebecca Johnston, American Indian Health Commission for Washington State; and Craig McLaughlin, State Board of Health.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.