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**Health Care Committee**

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**HB 1738**

**Brief Description:** Establishing an early detection breast and cervical cancer screening program.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Cody, Bailey, Schual-Berke, Fromhold, Woods, Upthegrove, Williams, Darneille, Kenney, Hunt, Campbell, Simpson, Tom, Hasegawa, Haler and Santos.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Establishes an early detection breast and cervical cancer screening program for women age 40 to 64 with income at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level, only as funds are available.
- Establishes a medical advisory committee on early prevention and detection for breast and cervical cancer.

**Hearing Date:** 2/24/05

**Staff:** Molly Belozar (786-7104).

**Background:**

In 1990, Congress passed the Breast and Cervical Cancer Mortality Prevention Act to provide grants to states for the purpose of screening women for breast and cervical cancer. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program in 1991 to help low income, uninsured, and underserved women gain access to screening programs for early detection of breast and cervical cancer. Implemented in all 50 states, the program provides clinical breast examinations, mammograms, pap tests, surgical consultation, and diagnostic testing for women with abnormal screening results.

The Department of Health (Department), through a CDC grant, administers a breast and cervical cancer early detection program for low-income women. Federal funding from FY00 to FY04 was \$15 million, and the state is required to contribute one dollar for every three dollars of federal funding. The Legislature has appropriated an annual \$1 million for breast and cervical cancer screening, coordination, and outreach services.

Breast cancer is the second most commonly diagnosed cancer among American women; according to a report on cancer statistics from the CDC and the National Cancer Institute, Washington has the highest incidence of breast cancer in the nation. According to the Department, early detection screening could prevent approximately 15 to 30 percent of breast cancer deaths among women over the age of 40.

Cervical cancer has a low incidence in the United States. According to the CDC, human papillomavirus (HPV) infection is a strong risk factor for cervical cancer, but regular Pap tests can detect HPV infection and pre-cancers. The Department believes that early detection screening can prevent most cervical cancer deaths.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Department must administer a state-supported early detection breast and cervical cancer screening program to assist eligible women with preventive health services. The screening program must enroll eligible women and, as funds are available to expand the program, additional eligible women. Eligible women are defined as women aged 40-64, with income at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level.

The funding from the state must not be used to replace federally-funded breast and cervical cancer early detection programs, but will be used to operate Department-approved programs or increase access to existing state-approved programs.

The Department must establish a Medical Advisory Committee (Committee) to provide expert medical advice and guidance in addressing concerns and program policy implementation of the early detection breast and cervical cancer screening program. The Committee must include interested medical professionals and consumer liaisons with expertise in areas relating to breast and cervical health.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 18, 2005.

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