

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2376

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 22, 2006
Ways & Means, February 27, 2006

Title: An act relating to repealing cost-sharing in medical programs.

Brief Description: Prohibiting the department of social and health services from imposing premiums on children in households with income at or below two hundred percent of the federal poverty level.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Clibborn, Morrell, Murray, Wallace, Cody, Schual-Berke, Simpson, Green, Sells, Ormsby, Appleton, Fromhold, Hunt, Kenney, Kessler, Lantz, Miloscia, Moeller and Williams; by request of Governor Gregoire).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/08/06, 74-24.

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/20/06, 2/22/06 [DP-WM, DNP].
Ways & Means: 2/27/06 [DP, DNP, w/oRec].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Thibaudeau, Vice Chair; Franklin, Kastama, Kline and Poulsen.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Ranking Minority Member; Benson and Parlette.

Staff: Jonathan Seib (786-7427)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair, Capital Budget Chair; Doumit, Vice Chair, Operating Budget; Brandland, Kohl-Welles, Pridemore, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller and Thibaudeau.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member and Pflug.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Parlette and Schoesler.

Staff: Tim Yowell (786-7435)

Background: In 2003, the law authorizing the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to establish copayment, deductible, or coinsurance requirements for recipients of medical assistance programs such as Medicaid was amended to allow the establishment of other cost sharing requirements, such as premiums.

Summary of Bill: An exception to the law allowing DSHS to impose cost sharing requirements on medical assistance recipients is established, prohibiting the imposition of premiums on children from households with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For (Health & Long-Term Care): This is Governor request legislation. It effectively codifies a directive that the Governor sent to DSHS last January to postpone the imposition of premiums on children below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. There is no impact to the state budget. Last session, Legislation was passed setting the goal in statute that all children in Washington have health coverage by 2010. The Governor supports this goal and believes that this bill moves us closer to achieving it.

Testimony Against (Health & Long-Term Care): None.

Who Testified (Health & Long-Term Care): PRO: Mark Rupp, Governor's Office; Sharon Case, Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers; Sarah Cherin Children's Alliance; Laurie Lippold, Children's Home Society of Washington; Len McComb, Washington State Hospital Association.

Testimony For (Ways & Means): Enacting this legislation would remove a barrier to children getting needed health care. There is research evidence that requiring families to pay premiums results in more uninsured children. This is an important step toward the goal of providing health insurance coverage for all children in the state by 2010.

Testimony Against (Ways & Means): None.

Who Testified (Ways & Means): PRO: Christina Hulet, Governor's Office; Sarah Chernin, Children's Alliance.