
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6671

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2010 Regular Session

By Senate Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Pflug, Marr, and Keiser)

READ FIRST TIME 02/05/10.

1 AN ACT Relating to emergency departments that are not physically
2 connected to a hospital; adding a new section to chapter 70.41 RCW;
3 creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that there is a clear
6 public interest in studying and evaluating the impact of freestanding
7 emergency rooms so as to make informed decisions about whether they
8 should be subject to certificate of need or other regulation and, if
9 so, the appropriate scope of that regulation.

10 In addition, the legislature finds that the certificate of need
11 process itself needs further review as to whether it appropriately
12 balances the health planning needs of community service areas. Before
13 any new facility categories are subjected to the certificate of need
14 process, a thorough review of its application in new settings is
15 necessary.

16 A freestanding emergency room means an emergency department that is
17 not physically connected or adjacent to a hospital licensed under
18 chapter 70.41 RCW.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 70.41 RCW
2 to read as follows:

3 The legislature declares a two-year moratorium on the construction
4 review and licensure approval of freestanding emergency rooms not under
5 construction by the effective date of this act to allow for a study and
6 evaluation of the impact of freestanding emergency rooms to take place.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The Washington state hospital association
8 may fund and sponsor a study of freestanding emergency rooms. It is
9 recommended that, at a minimum, the study address factors related to
10 access to care, patient safety, quality outcomes, costs to the
11 consumer, and the impact upon Washington's existing freestanding and
12 hospital-based emergency medical delivery system. The study and any
13 recommendations from the study of freestanding emergency rooms must be
14 submitted to the legislature by January 1, 2011.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act expires July 1, 2013.

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