

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1785

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Governmental Operations, February 24, 2014

Title: An act relating to authorizing de minimis use of state resources to provide information about programs that may be authorized payroll deductions.

Brief Description: Authorizing de minimis use of state resources to provide information about programs that may be authorized payroll deductions.

Sponsors: Representatives S. Hunt, Kristiansen and Ryu.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/12/14, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Governmental Operations: 2/24/14 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Hasegawa, Ranking Member; Conway and McCoy.

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

Background: State ethics law generally prohibits use of state resources for private benefit. Exceptions may be authorized for occasional use involving de minimus cost that does not interfere with performance of duties.

State employees may permit payroll deductions for certain authorized programs, including medical care, insurance offered by private insurers, and retirement accounts. Private insurers have sought permission to use state facilities to discuss insurance plans with state employees. The Washington State Executive Ethics Board has indicated that current law does not permit that practice.

Summary of Bill: Restrictions on private use of state resources do not prohibit providers of authorized payroll deduction programs from providing employees with information about the following:

- medical, surgical, and hospital care;
- life insurance or accident and health disability insurance; or
- individual retirement accounts.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill will permit insurers to meet with clients at state facilities to discuss insurance policies. That practice was previously permitted for over a decade pursuant to an Executive Ethics Board advisory opinion that was rescinded in 2011.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Hunt, prime sponsor; Tim Boyd, Aflac.