

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5509

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Health Care, February 14, 2013

Title: An act relating to electronic timekeeping for in-home personal care or respite services.

Brief Description: Concerning electronic timekeeping for in-home personal care or respite services.

Sponsors: Senators Becker and Keiser; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health Care: 2/12/13, 2/14/13 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Becker, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; Bailey, Cleveland, Frockt, Keiser, Ranking Member; Parlette and Schlicher.

Staff: Mich'l Needham (786-7442)

Background: The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) pays home care agencies for in-home personal care or respite services. DSHS must by law verify the agency employee hours by electronic timekeeping. Electronic timekeeping means an electronic, verifiable method of recording an employee's presence in the client's home at the beginning and end of the employee's client visit. The method used for verification requires the use of a landline phone but landlines are not always available.

Summary of Bill: DSHS is authorized to draft rules to establish limited exemption criteria for electronic timekeeping when a landline phone is not available.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: All homecare agencies have electronic timekeeping in place and methods to keep records in exceptional circumstances, when landline phones are not available or when the client visit does not start or end at the client's home. This amendment will allow us to clarify the record-keeping requirements in rule and avoid an audit risk. This language allows groups like Catholic Community Services to do what is common sense with timekeeping and ensure the ability to bill for services that are provided. The electronic timekeeping was put in place a few years ago as a cost-saving method, to ensure the documentation was captured, and it makes sense to allow a limited exception in the method for documentation.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Bill Moss, DSHS; Peter Nazzal, Catholic Community Services, WA Assn. of Home Care Agencies; Misha Werschkul, SEIU Healthcare 775NW.