

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6297

As of January 29, 2014

Title: An act relating to childhood immunization information.

Brief Description: Requiring the department of health to develop and make available resources for pregnant women regarding childhood immunizations.

Sponsors: Senators Becker and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health Care: 1/27/14.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Staff: Bonnie Kim (786-7316)

Background: Childhood immunizations or vaccines protect a child from serious diseases, including hepatitis B, rotavirus, and measles. Immunizations are considered safe for children but do carry some risk of mild to serious reactions.

The Department of Health (DOH), consistent with national immunization guidelines, requires a child to be vaccinated against, or show proof of acquired immunity for, 11 vaccine-preventable diseases before attending a Washington school or child care center, including diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis or whooping cough. A child may be exempt from immunization requirements for medical, religious, or philosophical reasons.

DOH maintains the Child Profile Health Promotion System to distribute health and safety mailings, including immunization information, to Washington parents of young children from birth to age six. DOH also maintains the Washington State Immunization Information System, formerly the Child Profile Immunization Registry, a web-based tool for health care providers and schools to track immunization records for Washington residents of all ages.

Summary of Bill: DOH must develop and make available resources for pregnant women regarding recommended childhood immunizations. The resources are intended to be provided to pregnant women by their health care providers to encourage discussion on childhood immunizations and postnatal care.

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.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE (Proposed Substitute): Changes the title from “An Act Relating to childhood immunization information,” to “An Act Relating to providing information regarding childhood immunizations to pregnant women.”

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: The intent of this bill is not to require vaccinations, but to provide literature early so that pregnant mothers have time to discuss concerns with their health care providers and make informed decisions. Pregnancy is the time when most women and families make decisions about immunizations, and a provider recommendation can make a difference. It is important to ensure up-to-date, factual information is available to parents. Vax Northwest is a regional partnership addressing vaccine hesitancy and developing tools for providers working with parents.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Becker, prime sponsor; Alison Carl White, WithinReach; Michele Roberts, DOH; Sydney Zvara, Assn. of WA Healthcare Plans.