

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESSB 6297

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As Passed Senate, February 13, 2014

**Title:** An act relating to providing information regarding childhood immunizations to pregnant women.

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

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Senators Becker and Kohl-Welles).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health Care: 1/27/14, 1/30/14 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 2/13/14, 49-0.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6297 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

**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

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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 Engrossed Substitute Bill:** DOH must develop and make available resources for pregnant women regarding recommended childhood immunizations, incorporating flexible approaches that reflect the perspective of the family and the impact on the child. The resources are intended to be provided to pregnant women by their health care providers to encourage discussion on childhood immunizations and postnatal care.

**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.