

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1651

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*As Reported By House Committee on:  
Local Government*

**Title:** An act relating to public hospital districts.

**Brief Description:** Providing for public hospital district chaplains.

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Franklin, Edmondson, Haugen, Ferguson, Valle and Wood.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Local Government, March 1, 1991, DPS.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**Majority Report:** *That Substitute House Bill No. 1651 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*  
Signed by 14 members: Representatives Haugen, Chair; Cooper, Vice Chair; Ferguson, Ranking Minority Member; Mitchell, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bray; Edmondson; Franklin; Horn; Nealey; Nelson; Rayburn; Roland; Wynne; and Zellinsky.

**Staff:** Steve Lundin (786-7127).

**Background:** Public hospital districts are authorized to provide a variety of health related facilities and services.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Public hospital districts are authorized to employ chaplains for their hospitals, health care facilities, and hospice programs.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** A one sentence, new section authorizes public hospital districts to hire chaplains, rather than adding two words to a six page long section of law.

A section is added providing an effective date of January 1, 1991, if a constitutional amendment is approved authorizing hospital districts to employ chaplains.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The act takes effect on January 1, 1992 if a constitutional amendment is approved at the November 1991, general election.

**Testimony For:** The auditor indicates that the constitution precludes hospital districts from employing chaplains. Chaplains can play an essential role in both the healing process and dying.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** (testified in support): Greg Vigdor, Washington State Hospital Association; and Jerry Sheehan, American Civil Liberties Union (if amendment adopted).