

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1849

As Passed House:

March 14, 2003

Title: An act relating to creating a list of health care providers willing to serve as volunteer resources.

Brief Description: Creating a list of health care providers willing to serve as volunteer resources during an emergency or disaster.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Bailey, Cody, Pflug, Morris, Skinner, McDonald, Ruderman, Pearson, Ahern, Schindler, Kagi, Kristiansen, Morrell, Orcutt, Darneille, Benson, Wood, Pettigrew, Newhouse, Clements, O'Brien, Linville, Moeller, Chase, Tom, Alexander, Talcott, Rockefeller, Woods and Anderson).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/27/03, 3/4/03 [DPS];

Appropriations: 3/8/03 [DPS(HC)].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/14/03, 94-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Authorizes the Department of Health (DOH) to ask health care professionals if the DOH may add their names and contact information to a list of potential volunteers to serve in case of a bioterrorist event, emergency, or disaster. The DOH shall make the list of volunteers available upon request to certain public agencies.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Benson, Campbell, Clibborn, Darneille, Moeller, Schual-Berke and Skinner.

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Health Care be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Sehlin, Ranking Minority Member; Pearson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Boldt, Buck, Clements, Cody, Conway, Cox, DeBolt, Dunshee, Grant, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Linville, McDonald, McIntire, Miloscia, Pflug, Ruderman, Schual-Berke, Sump and Talcott.

Staff: Amy Skei (786-7140).

Background:

The Department of Health (DOH) regulates 55 different types of health care professions. Currently, there are over 250,000 health care providers credentialed in these fields.

The Emergency Management Division of the Washington Military Department (Department) is responsible for matters related to preparing for and carrying out all non-military emergency functions to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters and to provide aid to victims of these events. The Director of the Department is responsible for developing a comprehensive emergency management plan which shall address all natural, technological, or human caused hazards that pose a risk to Washington State and for coordinating local resources. Political subdivisions may create local organizations to develop local emergency management plans that are consistent with the Department's comprehensive plan. Local organizations may also enter into mutual aid agreements with other local organizations to provide reciprocal assistance in the event of a disaster.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Department of Health (DOH) may ask health care professionals whether or not they are interested in having their names, professions, and contact information included on a list of potential volunteers to serve in the event of a bioterrorist incident, natural disaster, or other emergency or disaster where health care providers are needed. The DOH is required to maintain the list and send it upon request to local health departments, state emergency planning and response agencies, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: (Health Care) Creating a list of willing volunteers will help to coordinate the activities of the public health system and its partners in the event of a public health emergency.

Testimony For: (Appropriations) The purpose of this bill is to help us prepare for a bioterrorism event or other emergency or disaster. Of concern would be getting the health care work force needed to treat the injured. This would allow the agency to contact those licensed health care professionals who are not currently practicing. Participation would be purely voluntary.

Testimony Against: (Health Care) None.

Testimony Against: (Appropriations) None.

Testified: (Health Care) Representative Bailey, prime sponsor; John Erickson, Department of Health; and Frank Scoggins, Military Department.

Testified: (Appropriations) Representative Pflug, prime sponsor.