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Health Care Committee

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HB 1115

**Brief Description:** Establishing an arthritis pilot project.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Morrell, Campbell, Skinner, Benson, Cody, Pflug, Schual-Berke, Wallace, Darneille, McDonald, Kenney, Mielke and McDermott.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the Department of Health to contract with the Arthritis Foundation's Washington/Alaska chapter to conduct a pilot project. The pilot project would include education for the public and health care professionals, a needs assessment, and an advisory panel.

**Hearing Date:** 1/30/03

**Staff:** Chris Blake (786-7392).

**Background:**

Arthritis is a condition that causes joint pain and disability and comes in over 100 different forms. Osteoarthritis is one of the most common forms of arthritis, affecting approximately 20 million Americans. It is most prevalent in women and adults over 45 years old. It occurs when the cartilage at the end of the bones in joints wears out and causes the bones to rub against each other during movement. The other common variety of arthritis is rheumatoid arthritis which affects approximately 2.1 million Americans. Rheumatoid arthritis is caused by the inflammation of the membrane that lines the joints. Rheumatoid arthritis most frequently affects the joints in the wrists, hands, feet and ankles.

In November 1998, the Arthritis Foundation, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released the *National Arthritis Action Plan*. The plan focuses on three areas for dealing with arthritis in society including (1) prevention, (2) early diagnosis, and (3) interventions to limit the disease's disabling effects. In May 2001, the Washington State Department of Health released the *Arthritis Action Plan for Washington State: 2001-2005*. A grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention funded the study which provides a public health approach to addressing the occurrence of arthritis in Washington State residents.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Department of Health (Department) must contract with the Arthritis Foundation's Washington/Alaska chapter (Foundation) for a two-year pilot project. The project would consolidate underutilized education materials related to the reduction and prevention of disability associated with arthritis. These resources would be distributed to raise public awareness; educate consumers; and educate and train health professionals, teachers, and human services providers.

The contract must include a needs assessment to identify (1) epidemiological and public health research being conducted in Washington, (2) technical assistance and educational materials available nationwide and in Washington, (3) services for people with arthritis, (4) existing educational pilot projects regarding arthritis treatment, self-management, and physical activity, and (5) existing rehabilitation services.

The contract shall create a volunteer advisory panel. The panel's members shall include people with arthritis, public health educators, medical experts on arthritis, providers of arthritis health care, people with knowledge of health promotions and education, and representatives of the Arthritis Foundation. The panel shall use strategies that are consistent with the National Arthritis Action Plan to raise public awareness and knowledge of the causes of arthritis, personal risk factors, the value of prevention and early detection, ways to minimize preventable pain, and diagnostic and treatment options.

The Department shall provide staff to assist the Foundation. To fund the pilot project, the Secretary of Health may accept grants from public and private entities and seek any federal waivers as necessary to maximize funds.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 21, 2003.

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