

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2354

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 19, 2004

Title: An act relating to rates for a medicare supplement insurance policy.

Brief Description: Concerning rates for a medicare supplement insurance policy.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Kristiansen, McMahan, Newhouse, Roach, McDonald, Sullivan, Ahern, G. Simpson, Pearson, Morrell, Bailey and Benson).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/19/04 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Winsley, Vice Chair; Brandland, Franklin, Keiser, Parlette and Thibaudeau.

Staff: Jonathan Seib (786-7427)

Background: Health carriers that sell Medicare supplement insurance policies have given enrollees premium rate discounts based on various factors. The Office of the Insurance Commissioner recently informed the carriers that they must stop this practice because it violates current law requiring all premiums for Medicare supplement insurance policies be equal for all policy holders.

Summary of Bill: Health carriers that issue Medicare supplement insurance policies may vary premiums based on spousal discounts, frequency of payment, and method of payment, including automatic deposit.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill is responsive to the many constituent calls made to legislators by seniors concerned about losing the discounts they receive on their Medicare supplemental policies. The Insurance Commissioner and groups representing seniors would like this bill to pass so those discounts will continue.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Representative Kristiansen, prime sponsor; Bill Daley, Office of the Insurance Commissioner.