

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5147

As Passed Senate, March 6, 2003

Title: An act relating to regulating automobile insurance.

Brief Description: Regulating automobile insurance.

Sponsors: Senators Winsley and Prentice; by request of Insurance Commissioner.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Financial Services, Insurance & Housing: 1/27/03, 1/28/03 [DP].
Passed Senate: 3/6/03, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES, INSURANCE & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Benton, Chair; Winsley, Vice Chair; Keiser, Prentice, Reardon, Roach and Zarelli.

Staff: Alison Mendiola-Hamilton (786-7576)

Background: Historically, personal injury protection insurance requirements were listed only in state regulations, not statute. As a result of negotiations between the insurance industry and consumer advocates, the regulations were codified in RCW 48.22. There is concern that the resulting statute is not as user-friendly as stakeholders had hoped.

Summary of Bill: Minor revisions are made to the personal injury protection requirements with the intent of clarifying the application of the law. There are no changes in coverage requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill makes personal injury protection (PIP) laws more consistent. Currently, the Office of the Insurance Commissioner spends a lot of time explaining PIP laws to both insurers and consumers alike. Moving the descriptions of PIP coverage into the definition section (RCW 48.22.005) will make the statute more user friendly.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Lisa Smego, Department of Financial Institutions.