

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 6356

C 163 L 04

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Modifying physician assistant provisions.

Sponsors: Senators Honeyford and Rasmussen.

Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care
House Committee on Commerce & Labor

Background: A worker who, in the course of employment, is injured or suffers disability from an occupational disease is entitled to benefits under Washington's industrial insurance law. These benefits include proper and necessary medical and surgical services from a physician of the worker's choice. Currently, a worker entitled to compensation files an application with a certificate from the physician who attended him or her.

Physician assistants are licensed to practice medicine or osteopathic medicine to a limited extent under the supervision of a licensed physician or osteopathic physician respectively. Physician assistants may fill out certificates for workers' compensation, but the certificates must be signed by a physician.

Summary: Physician assistants may assist workers applying for compensation for simple industrial injuries. Physician assistants are prohibited from rating a worker's permanent partial disability or determining a worker's entitlement to compensation. The Department of Labor and Industries must adopt necessary rules.

The Department of Labor and Industries must report to the Senate Committee on Commerce and Trade and the House Committee on Commerce and Labor on the implementation of this bill by December 1, 2006. Included in the report shall be the effects of this bill on injured worker outcomes, claim costs, and disputed claims.

This bill expires July 1, 2007.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 49 0
House 96 0 (House amended)
Senate 49 0 (Senate concurred)

Effective: July 1, 2004