

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1652

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to authorizing fire protection districts to establish or participate in health clinic services.

Brief Description: Authorizing fire protection districts to establish or participate in health clinic services.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Ericks, Appleton, Simpson, Kilmer, Eickmeyer, Woods, Lovick, Santos and Linville).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/18/05, 2/24/05 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/8/05, 97-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 4/13/05, 40-7.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Two fire protection districts in Washington may participate in the operation and maintenance of a health clinic.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Campbell, Vice Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Bailey, Ranking Minority Member; Curtis, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Appleton, Clibborn, Condotta, Green, Hinkle, Lantz, Moeller and Schual-Berke.

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146).

Background:

Point Roberts, Washington is bounded on three sides by water and shares a common border with Canada. While part of Whatcom County, residents must drive through two international borders to seek medical attention in the county's largest city, Bellingham. In 2002, a group of local citizens attempted to open a health clinic in conjunction with the local fire protection district to serve some of the health needs of area residents. The State Auditor's Office

indicated at the time that the fire protection district did not have the statutory authority to assist with the operation of a health clinic.

In 2003, the Legislature specifically authorized the fire protection district at Point Roberts, Washington to participate in the operation and maintenance of a health clinic. It is the only fire protection district in Washington authorized to do so.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Authorizes one additional fire protection district bounded on the north by Bremerton, the west by Mason County, the south by Pierce County, and the east by Puget Sound is authorized to participate in the operation and maintenance of health clinics.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S):

The department of health is required to study the merits of allowing all fire protection districts to provide health clinic services. An advisory committee is created. The department will provide findings and recommendations to the legislature by October 1, 2005.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This change is needed to help improve access to health care.

Testimony Against: The bill as introduced is too broad. It should be narrowed to the specific fire protection district seeking this change.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Mike Brown, Washington State Fire Chiefs; Wayne Senter, South Kitsap Fire and Rescue; and Paul Baker, South Kitsap Family Care Clinic.

(Opposed) Robb Menaul, Washington State Hospital Association; and Susie Tracy, Washington State Medical Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.