

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2376

As Passed House:
February 8, 2006

Title: An act relating to repealing cost-sharing in medical programs.

Brief Description: Repealing cost-sharing in medical programs.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Clibborn, Morrell, Murray, Wallace, Cody, Schual-Berke, Simpson, Green, Sells, Ormsby, Appleton, Fromhold, Hunt, Kenney, Kessler, Lantz, Miloscia, Moeller and Williams; by request of Governor Gregoire).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 1/12/06, 1/13/06 [DPS];
Appropriations: 1/30/06, 1/31/06 [DPS(HC)].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/8/06, 74-24.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- The ability to charge premiums from recipients of medical care services is removed for children in households at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Campbell, Vice Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Curtis, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Clibborn, Green, Lantz, Moeller, Schual-Berke and Skinner.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Hinkle, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Bailey and Condotta.

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Health Care be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair;

Fromhold, Vice Chair; Cody, Conway, Darneille, Dunshee, Grant, Haigh, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Linville, McDermott, McIntire, Miloscia, Schual-Berke, P. Sullivan and Walsh.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Alexander, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McDonald, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Bailey, Buri, Chandler, Clements, Hinkle, Pearson, Priest and Talcott.

Staff: Amy Hanson (786-7118).

Background:

The Department of Social and Health Services is authorized to establish co-payment, deductible, co-insurance requirements, and other cost sharing requirements, such as premiums for participation in Medicaid and other state-funded medical programs.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The ability to charge premiums from recipients of medical care services is removed for children in households at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

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: (Health Care) Charging premiums for children in households with income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level will result in families dropping out of publically funded health programs and children going without needed health care.

Testimony For: (Appropriations) This legislation effectively codifies a directive that the Governor sent to the secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services in January to revert the state from a six-month eligibility review to a 12-month eligibility review for children's health programs as well as stave off the premiums that would have been instituted. Last session, the Legislature passed legislation setting the goal in statute that we will be covering all children in Washington by 2010. The Governor supports that goal and believes that removing this barrier is one step closer to that goal. This bill is critical to protecting the health of Washington's children and a necessary step to covering all children by 2010. It is a well documented fact that charging Medicaid premiums results in children losing health coverage. Repealing the authority will not change premiums being charged of moderate family incomes enrolled in the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and has no fiscal cost associated with it. While the state passed the authority to charge Medicaid premiums in 2003, the authority has never been used and implementation has continually been delayed. It is time to make that delay permanent and remove the threat that premiums pose to children's health.

Testimony Against: (Health Care) None.

Testimony Against: (Appropriations) None.

Persons Testifying: (Health Care) Representative Clibborn, prime sponsor; Mark Rupp, Office of the Governor; Roger Gantz, Department of Social and Health Services; Liz Arjun, Children's Alliance; Beth Harvey, Washington American Academy of Pediatrics; Shawn Cantrell, Washington Community Action; Sharon Case, Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers and Community Health Network of Washington; Len McComb, Washington State Hospital Association; and Don Sloma, Washington Health Foundation.

Persons Testifying: (Appropriations) Mark Rupp, Office of the Governor; Sarah Cherin, Children's Alliance; and Roger Gantz, Department of Social and Health Services.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: (Health Care) None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: (Appropriations) None.