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**Health Care Committee**

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**HB 1441**

**Brief Description:** Providing access to health insurance for children.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Clibborn, Morrell, Campbell, Cody, Tom, Moeller, Schual-Berke, Wallace, Grant, Williams, Lovick, Ormsby, Chase, Kessler, Kagi, Hunt, Appleton, Darneille, Uptegrove, Sells, Roberts, Conway, Miloscia, Fromhold, P. Sullivan, Santos, Takko, Green, Wood, Simpson, Hasegawa and Dickerson.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Prohibits premium requirements for children or pregnant women eligible for medical assistance or the children's health program.
- Provides a minimum of a twelve month eligibility review cycle.
- Authorizes the children's health program to provide a different amount, duration, and scope of services than that provided through the medical assistance program.

**Hearing Date:** 2/8/05

**Staff:** Dave Knutson (786-7146).

**Background:**

The federal government granted a request from the State of Washington to charge monthly premiums for medical, dental, and mental health coverage of children whose family income is above the poverty level. The Department of Social and Health Services has the statutory authority to establish, copayment, deductible, coinsurance, or other cost-sharing requirements for recipients of any medical program. Currently, the eligibility review cycle for the medical assistance program is every six months. The amount, scope, and duration of health care services for children served through the children's health program is the same as that provided to children through the medical assistance program operated by the Department of Social and Health Services.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Department of Social and Health Services is prohibited from establishing premium requirements for children or pregnant women who are eligible for either the medical assistance or children's health programs. The eligibility review cycle for children and pregnant women who are eligible for either the medical assistance or children's health programs is extended from every six months to no more frequently than every twelve months. The requirement that the University of

Washington conduct an evaluation of the maternity care access program is deleted. The Department of Social and Health Services is authorized to contract with various organizations to conduct outreach and enrollment assistance activities for low-income families who do not have access to affordable health insurance coverage.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on 2/4/05.

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