

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 6231

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Exempting certain private air ambulance services from licensing under the insurance code.

Sponsors: Senator Spanel; by request of Insurance Commissioner.

Senate Committee on Financial Institutions, Housing & Consumer Protection

House Committee on Financial Institutions & Insurance

Background: Legislation passed in 2005 (ESSB 5736) required the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) to provide a feasibility study to the Legislature regarding subscription air ambulance services. Air ambulances have been controversial for various reasons, including the issue of whether they should be regulated as "insurers," or whether there may be some alternate method of providing consumer protection for subscribers of air ambulance services. This bill is the result of the OIC's research and recommendations.

Summary: Private air ambulance services that solicit and accept membership subscriptions, charge fees and provide services are not considered to be insurers under Washington State statutes, if they meet licensure and aeromedical transport services criteria, have been in operation in Washington for a minimum of two years, and submit evidence of compliance to the OIC

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	0
House	97	0

Effective: June 7, 2006