

VETO MESSAGE ON 1486-S

May 13, 2005

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,
The House of Representatives of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning, without my approval, Substitute House Bill No. 1486 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to health care services;"

I strongly support the intent of this bill and believe that collecting data on who is relying on state-subsidized programs and why it is important to our understanding of the overall health care system. I am vetoing this bill for two reasons. First, the Legislature did not appropriate funding to implementation the bill, and the bill requires the collection of data elements that are particularly resource-intensive. Second, the bill raises significant privacy and state public disclosure concerns regarding the release of employer-specific information.

In recognition of the intent of the bill, I direct the Health Care Authority and the Department of Social and Health Services to develop a report contemplated by the bill that is consistent with federal and state law. I look forward to working with the Legislature during the next session to develop legislation that meets our reporting needs, that can be implemented with appropriated funds, and that is consistent with existing laws and regulations.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Substitute House Bill No. 1486 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine O. Gregoire
Governor