

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1201

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### As Reported by House Committee On:

Health Care & Wellness

Appropriations

**Title:** An act relating to extending medicaid coverage for foster care youth who reach age eighteen.

**Brief Description:** Extending medicaid coverage for foster care youth who reach age eighteen.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Roberts, Kagi, Haler, P. Sullivan, Walsh, Pettigrew, Darneille, Santos, McCoy, Ormsby, Wood, Dickerson, Clibborn, Schual-Berke, Simpson, Lantz, Hasegawa, Kenney, Pedersen and Seaquist.

### Brief History:

#### Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 1/24/07, 2/5/07 [DPS];

Appropriations: 2/15/07, 2/22/07 [DP2S(w/o sub HCW)].

#### Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- The Department of Social and Health Services will continue health coverage for foster children from their 18th birthday through their 21st birthday.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Hinkle, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Barlow, Campbell, Condotta, Green, Moeller, Pedersen, Schual-Berke and Seaquist.

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

#### Background:

The Department of Social and Health Services (Department) provides services to youth in foster care generally through age 18, unless the youth is in school or in treatment. In addition

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to foster care placement services, the Department may provide medical coverage through Medicaid or the Medical Assistance Program.

Medical coverage is generally available through age 18 for all children covered by Medicaid. A few young adults between ages 18 and 21 that remain in foster care maintain eligibility for medical assistance.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

Eligibility for Medicaid or Medical Assistance is extended for youth that were in foster care on their 18th birthday, up to age 21, irrespective of continuing placement in foster care.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

A definition of "foster care" is added that is consistent with the federal Medicaid definition. The Department is directed to use the same income eligibility standards and eligibility determinations for the 18 to 21 year olds that is used for children in foster care.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Original requested on January 19, 2007. Substitute bill requested on February 5, 2007.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Extending Medicaid coverage to people aging out of foster care will result in reduced use of emergency rooms. It will help young adults coming from foster homes to keep health coverage until they are able to get a job and find health coverage through an employer.

(Concerns) The bill as introduced did not cover all out of home placements authorized by the federal government.

(Neutral) Funding for this proposal is not included in the Governor's budget request.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Roberts, prime sponsor; Timothy Bell, Connected Youth and Alumni Leaders of Tacoma and Passion To Action; Delilah Bruskas, Connected Youth and Alumni Leaders of Tacoma; Ken Kirsch; Benita Gjurasic; Jim Theopolis, Mockingbird Society; Casey Trupin, Columbia Legal Services; and Sean Walsh, Young Men's Christian Association of Greater Seattle.

(Concerns) Loren Freeman, Freeman Association.

(Neutral) Manning Pellanda, Department of Social and Health Services and Health Recovery Services Administration.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.

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## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Majority Report:** The second substitute bill be substituted therefor and the second substitute bill do pass and do not pass the substitute bill by Committee on Health Care & Wellness. Signed by 32 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Dunshee, Vice Chair; Alexander, Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buri, Chandler, Cody, Conway, Darneille, Ericks, Fromhold, Grant, Haigh, Hinkle, Hunt, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Kretz, Linville, McDermott, McDonald, McIntire, Morrell, Pettigrew, Priest, Schual-Berke, Seaquist, P. Sullivan and Walsh.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Anderson and Dunn.

**Staff:** Bernard Dean (786-7130).

### **Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Health Care & Wellness:**

The Appropriations Committee clarified that the extension of Medicaid coverage for individuals who are under 21 years of age and who were in foster care on their 18th birthday is limited to persons who turn 18 while in foster care on or after the effective date of the bill. Additionally, a null and void clause was added.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Second Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

### **Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The intent of this bill is to look at kids with a legal dependency with the state. We did not intend the bill to be retroactive. We will probably be dealing with a maximum population of 900 moving forward.

This is a straightforward bill. They are kids of the state. The bill will be a cost savings as kids who age out now don't receive preventative care. In 1999, the federal government gave permission to states to provide coverage until age 21. Twelve states have done that; as diverse as California and Mississippi. The bill also comes with a generous federal match.

Many youth will age out when they turn 18 with little financial or social support. This bill will help our youth make a better transition and improve their quality of life. They should receive Medicaid until 21.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Roberts, prime sponsor; Jim Theofelis, Mockingbird Society; Delilah Bouskas, Connected Youth and Alumni Leaders of Tacoma; and Van Tay.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.