

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5153

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care & Wellness

Title: An act relating to encouraging employers to be infant-friendly.

Brief Description: Encouraging employers to be infant-friendly.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development (originally sponsored by Senators Franklin, Kohl-Welles, Shin, Weinstein, Oemig, Keiser, Kauffman, Rockefeller, Fairley, Hargrove, Rasmussen, Spanel, Fraser, Jacobsen and Haugen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 3/19/07, 3/22/07 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires employers to disclose information to employees about the adoption of infant-friendly policies.
- Directs the Department of Health to establish a stakeholder group to develop model infant-friendly policies.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Barlow, Campbell, Green, Moeller, Pedersen, Schual-Berke and Seaquist.

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

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

Employers that meet certain requirements may be designated by the Department of Health (Department) as "infant-friendly" if they have approved workplace breastfeeding policies. To receive the designation the policy must allow for a flexible work schedule; a convenient,

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sanitary, safe, and private location for breastfeeding or expressing breastmilk; a convenient, clean, and safe water source for washing hands and equipment; and a convenient, hygienic refrigerator for storing breast milk.

Summary of Bill:

Employers that have infant-friendly policies must include them in their personnel policies and mention whether or not they have been approved by the Department. If asked by an employee, an employer must tell an employee whether it has an infant-friendly policy or not, and if it does have such a policy, it shall disclose whether it has been approved by the Department or not.

The Department is instructed to convene a stakeholder group to develop model infant-friendly policies for employers. The Department must use existing mailings by state agencies to inform employers about the availability of the model policies and the infant-friendly designation. In addition, the Department must provide the policies to doctors, midwives, lactation consultants, and hospitals to distribute to expectant and new mothers.

Appropriation: The sum of \$55,000.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The changing workforce has many new mothers who would like to have the opportunity to breastfeed. Breast milk is one of the best sources of nutrition for infants. Mothers returning to work deserve to know where they can expect to breast pump. There are large and small businesses that support mothers returning to work. Small businesses want to be able to accommodate new mothers so that they may retain their employees.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Franklin, prime sponsor; Kim Rechner; and Carolyn Logue, National Federation of Independent Business.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.