

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1337

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, March 22, 2007

**Title:** An act relating to insurance coverage for colorectal cancer early detection.

**Brief Description:** Regarding coverage for colorectal cancer examinations and laboratory tests.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Kenney, Skinner, Hunter, Priest, Darneille, Ericks, Pettigrew, Hankins, Lantz, Fromhold, Walsh, Williams, Kessler, Haler, Morrell, Barlow, McCoy, Appleton, Ormsby, Springer, Campbell, Moeller, Lovick, Rolfes, Hasegawa, Flannigan, Hudgins, Hunt, Green, Chase, Dunshee, Simpson, Roberts, O'Brien, Rodne, Dickerson, Quall, Goodman, Linville, Hurst, Santos and Wallace).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/08/07, 83-13.

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 3/22/07 [DP, DNP, w/oRec].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Fairley, Kastama and Kohl-Welles.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Pflug, Ranking Minority Member.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Carrell and Parlette.

**Staff:** Mich'l Needham (786-7442)

**Background:** According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer in the United States. The ACS estimates that 153,760 new cases of colon and rectal cancer will occur in 2007, with 52,180 deaths. The ACS also reports that the death rate from these cancers has decreased over the last 15 years, in part because screening tests allow polyps to be found and removed before they become cancerous.

In January 2003, the Department of Health (DOH) reported on a sunrise review of mandated colorectal cancer screening. The DOH recommended adoption of a mandated screening benefit with various technical recommendations. The DOH noted in its report that although

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most health plans provided coverage for colorectal cancer screening, the plans are not uniformly following the recommendations of the ACS.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Insurance plans issued or renewed after July 1, 2008, must cover colorectal cancer examinations and laboratory tests consistent with guidelines or recommendations of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coverage must be provided for the screening and tests at the frequency identified in the guidelines or recommendations, as deemed appropriate by the patient's physician after patient consultation. These benefits must be provided to individuals at least 50 years old and to those who are under age 50 if they are at high risk or very high risk for colorectal cancer according to the screening guidelines or recommendations.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: It is critical that early screening be made available to everyone. This provides a first rate approach to preventing disease. The DOH sunrise review recommended a mandate, and it is the right approach to keeping people healthy.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Kenney, prime sponsor; Representative Skinner, co-sponsor.