
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 2160

Brief Description: Concerning health carrier payment of wellness incentives.

Sponsors: Representatives Driscoll, Hinkle, Cody, Bailey, Kelley, Wood and Morrell; by request of Governor Gregoire.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Health carriers are specifically permitted to offer a wellness program that complies the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA).

Hearing Date: 2/19/09

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146)

Background:

Health carriers develop rates based on an adjusted community rate that may be varied for geographic area, family size, age, and wellness activities. Wellness activities include an explicit activity consistent with Department of Health guidelines, such as, smoking cessation, injury and accident prevention, reduction of alcohol misuse, appropriate weight reduction, exercise, automobile and motorcycle safety, blood cholesterol reduction, and nutrition education for the purpose of improving enrollee health status and reducing health service costs. There has been a question whether a health carrier can offer a wellness discount based on statutory language that prohibits a health carrier from offering rebates or inducements to purchase health insurance coverage.

Summary of Bill:

Notwithstanding a prohibition against offering rebates or inducements to purchase insurance, health carriers are specifically permitted to offer a wellness program that complies with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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