

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5848

As of February 8, 2009

Title: An act relating to increasing annual immunization rates.

Brief Description: Increasing immunization.

Sponsors: Senator Keiser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: Washington State currently lags behind other states in immunization levels. Vaccines are among the most cost-effective and life-saving interventions of modern medicine. The Department of Health (DOH) has cited a variety of factors which have impacted Washington's immunization rates negatively. These factors include: misinformation about immunizations, lack of reminder calls, limited office hours, low Medicaid reimbursement for administration of vaccines, vaccine shortages, and ease in opting out of immunizations. Funding for purchase of vaccines and administration of the state's immunization program is provided through DOH.

Local health jurisdictions are required to submit an immunization assessment and enhancement proposal to DOH which is consistent with the standards established in the public health improvement plan. The goal is to provide immunization protection to the children of the state to further reduce vaccine-preventable diseases. Plans must include a description of those groups with the greatest need for immunization, strategies to enhance immunization rates, and a description of the capacity required to accomplish the enhancement within available funding. The Secretary of DOH is to report progress under the public health improvement plan to the health care and fiscal committees of the Legislature.

Summary of Bill: Funding currently appropriated to DOH for the purpose of administering the state's immunization program is transferred to the local health jurisdictions. DOH and local health jurisdictions will work collaboratively to ensure that immunizations are increased annually. Funds are to be transferred July 1, 2009, and local health jurisdictions will begin reporting immunization rates July 1, 2011, for the previous year.

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.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.