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**HOUSE BILL 1186**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Clibborn, Springer, Johnson, Senn, Moeller, McBride, Walkinshaw, Caldier, and Fey

AN ACT Relating to notifications to patients in observation status at hospitals; and adding a new section to chapter 70.41 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 70.41 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Each hospital shall provide oral and written notification to any patient or patient's representative within twenty-four hours of having been determined to be in observation status. The notice must include:

(a) A statement that the patient is under observation status and not admitted to the hospital;

(b) A statement that observation status may affect the patient's medicare, medicaid, or private insurance coverage for:

(i) Hospital services, including medications and pharmaceutical supplies; or

(ii) Home or community-based care or care at a skilled nursing facility upon the patient's discharge;

(c) A recommendation that the patient contact his or her insurance provider to better understand the implications of being determined to be in observation status; and

(d) A recommendation that the patient or the patient's representative consult with his or her physician about the risks of leaving the hospital prior to formal discharge.

(2) The patient or the patient's representative must sign the statement to verify that he or she received the notice and understands its contents.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "observation status" means the classification of a patient before a decision is made regarding whether the patient will require further treatment as a hospital inpatient or if the patient may be able to be discharged from the hospital.

**--- END ---**