

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1775

As Reported by House Committee On: Appropriations

Title: An act relating to reducing the costs of state health care expenses for residents committed to the special commitment center operated by the department of social and health services.

Brief Description: Authorizing the department of social and health services special commitment center to seek eligibility and reimbursement for health care costs covered by federal medicare, medicaid, and veterans health benefits.

Sponsors: Representatives Cody, Jinkins, Tharinger and Muri; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/18/15, 2/25/15 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the Department of Social and Health Services to act on behalf of a resident of the Special Commitment Center for the purposes of applying for health care benefits.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 30 members: Representatives Hunter, Chair; Ormsby, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Parker, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Wilcox, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buys, Carlyle, Cody, Dent, Dunshee, Fagan, Haler, Hansen, Hudgins, S. Hunt, Jinkins, Kagi, Lytton, MacEwen, Magendanz, Pettigrew, Sawyer, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Stokesbary, Sullivan, Tharinger, Van Werven and Walkinshaw.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Condotta, G. Hunt and Taylor.

Staff: James Kettel (786-7123).

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.

Background:

A Sexually Violent Predator (SVP) suffers from a mental abnormality, or personality disorder, and has been convicted of, or charged with, a sexually violent offense. An SVP is likely to engage in predatory acts of sexual violence if not confined to a secure facility. When it appears that a person may meet the criteria of an SVP, a prosecuting agency may file a petition to confine the person alleged as an SVP. If a person is found at trial beyond a reasonable doubt to be an SVP, then the state is authorized under the Community Protection Act of 1990 to involuntarily commit the person to a total confinement facility on McNeil Island, called the Special Commitment Center (SCC), for an indefinite period of time.

The individual is held in total confinement until: (a) the individual's condition has so changed that the individual no longer meets the definition of an SVP; or (b) the court orders the person's conditional release to a less-restrictive alternative placement. During the period of total confinement, the SCC is responsible for outpatient care, inpatient care, prescription drugs, and other medical care for residents.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Social and Health Services is authorized to act on behalf of a civilly committed resident of the Special Commitment Center for the purposes of applying for Medicare, Medicaid, veterans health benefits, or other health care benefits available as a result of participation in a health care exchange.

Appropriation: None.**Fiscal Note:** Available.**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) If a resident of the Special Commitment Center (SCC) requires inpatient health care, then these services are usually eligible for Medicaid reimbursement. Some residents of the SCC have been less than forthcoming in signing up for Medicaid, or other federal benefits. This bill just gives the Department of Social and Health Services authority to enroll residents for coverage. With an aging resident population the cost of inpatient care has become even more expensive. This bill prevents a situation where a resident refuses to apply for Medicaid benefits, and the state would have to pick up the entire cost. In fiscal year 2014, Medicaid approved reimbursement on \$579,000 for inpatient costs. Thus far in fiscal year 2015, the SCC has applied for reimbursement on \$810,000 for inpatient costs. The \$810,000 in fiscal year 2015 is for only nine residents. The Department of Corrections was given similar authority to sign inmates up for Medicaid coverage a few years ago, and this

has saved the state a great deal of money. The fiscal impact from this bill has already been accounted for in the Governor's budget.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Cody, prime sponsor; and David Griffith, Juvenile Justice and Rehabilitation Administration, Department of Social and Health Services.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.