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**ESB 5241** - H AMD TO APP COMM AMD (H-3433.2/24) **1191**

By Representative Walsh

 On page 1, beginning on line 11 of the striking amendment, beginning with "(3)" strike all material through "affected." on page 23, line 14 and insert the following:

 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The department of health and the Washington state health care authority shall jointly convene and staff a blue-ribbon task force to study the causes and effects of health care provider consolidation within the state of Washington. The task force shall provide for the broad representation of providers and consumers of health care services, including but not limited to hospitals, insurers, independent practice groups, individual providers and community based clinics, and shall at a minimum, evaluate the following:

(a) Factors contributing to the high rate of consolidation in Washington compared with other states;

(b) The impact that such consolidation has had, or not had, upon the availability of various medical practice areas and services in various markets across the state;

(c) The impact that such consolidation has had, or not had, upon the pricing of health care services in various markets across the state;

(d) The impact that such consolidation has had, or not had, upon the availability of abortion, gender affirming care, and end-of-life care services provided in accordance with chapter 70.245 RCW in various markets across the state; and

(e) The impact that Washington’s medicaid reimbursement rates over the past ten years, compared to states with less consolidation, may, or may not, have affected the need for small providers or provider networks to merge with bigger systems, in order to survive or remain in certain markets across the state.

(2) By July 1, 2025, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the blue-ribbon task force established by this section shall submit a report to the legislature that details all findings and recommendations regarding the causes and effects of health care provider consolidation within the state of Washington.

(3) This section expires July 1, 2025."

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|  |  EFFECT:  Strikes all content from the bill followingsubsections (1) and (2) of legislative findings. Adds a new sectionrequiring the Department of Health and the Washington State HealthCare Authority to jointly convene a task force to study the causesand effects of health care provider consolidation within the Stateof Washington. Requires broad representation of providers andconsumers on the task force and provides subjects the task forcemust evaluate. Requires the task force to report its findings andrecommendations to the Legislature no later than July 1, 2025. Addsan expiration date of July 1, 2025.  |

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