

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5228

As of January 24, 2025

Title: An act relating to updating the name, authority, membership, and duties of the governor's interagency coordinating council on health disparities.

Brief Description: Updating the governor's interagency coordinating council on health disparities.

Sponsors: Senators Riccelli, Hasegawa, Conway, Nobles and Wilson, C.; by request of Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/24/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Updates the name, membership, and duties of the Governor's Interagency Coordinating Council on Health Disparities.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Greg Attanasio (786-7410)

Background: In 2006, the Legislature created the Governor's Interagency Coordinating Council on Health Disparities (Council). The Council is directed to:

- promote and facilitate communication, coordination, and collaboration among relevant state agencies, communities of color, and the private and public sector to address health disparities;
- conduct public hearings, inquiries, studies, or other forms of information gathering to understand how the actions of state government ameliorate or contribute to health disparities; and
- review existing data and recommend initiatives for improving the availability of culturally appropriate health literature and interpretive services within public and

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

private health-related agencies.

The Board of Health is directed to convene the Council and assist in its work.

Council membership includes one member from the:

- Washington State Commission on African American Affairs;
- Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs;
- Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs;
- Governor's Office of Indian Affairs;
- State Board of Health;
- Department of Health
- Department of Social and Health Services;
- Health Care Authority;
- Department of Agriculture;
- Department of Ecology;
- Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- Department of Children, Youth, and Families; and
- The Workforce Training and Education Board

The Council also includes two public members who represent interests of health care consumers.

Summary of Bill: The name of the Council is updated to the Governor's Council for Health Justice and Equity. The membership of the Council is modified to add one member from the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment, one member from the LGBTQ Commission, one member from the Women's Commission, and one member from a federally recognized tribe. Public membership is increased to six, including at least two youth representatives who are 26 years old or younger at the time of appointment.

All councilmembers must be persons who are committed to and well informed regarding principles of health justice and equity and who, to the greatest extent practicable, reflect diversity in race, ethnicity, age, disability status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, military or military family status, urban and rural areas, and regions of the state. State agencies represented on the Council must identify executive level staff to participate on the Council.

The Governor shall appoint cochairs who have expertise or experience with health justice and equity. At least one cochair must be a representative of one of the commissions represented on the Council, the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment, the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, or a federally recognized tribe.

The Council shall work with governmental and nongovernmental partners to create a statewide vision and universal goals for health and well-being as well as policy recommendations to move Washington toward achieving its vision and goals. The vision,

goals, and policy recommendations shall:

- provide an actionable framework to support communities, state agencies, the Governor, and the Legislature in advancing health justice and equity in Washington State;
- recognize racism as a public health crisis;
- recognize how climate change affects us all and exacerbates inequities;
- incorporate the diversity of communities across the state and recognize the intersecting forms of oppression people may experience as barriers to attaining optimal health and reaching their full potential;
- guide state agencies as they continue to fulfill requirements of the Office of Equity and the Environmental Justice Council; and
- work toward resolving the negative structural and social determinants of health and promoting the positive determinants.

The Council shall engage communities and may use participatory methods that promote community-led planning and design so that communities who are disproportionately impacted by inequities have meaningful opportunity and power to shape narratives, priorities, and policy recommendations. The Council shall promote and facilitate communication, information sharing, coordination, and collaboration among relevant state agencies and organizations, communities of color and other marginalized communities, and the private and public sectors to support health justice and equity, well-being, truth and reconciliation, and healing.

The Council shall conduct public hearings, research, inquires, studies, and other information gathering to:

- understand how the actions of state government ameliorate or contribute to health inequities; and
- recommend initiatives for improving the availability of culturally and linguistically appropriate information and services within public and private health-related agencies.

The Council shall collaborate with the Environmental Justice Council, the State Poverty Reduction Work Group, the Office of Equity, and other state agencies, boards, committees, and commissions to propel state government toward actions that are coordinated and rooted in antiracism, access, belonging, and justice so that these efforts benefit all Washingtonians.

The Council shall submit an initial report to the Governor and relevant committees of the Legislature by October 31, 2027, with the statewide vision and universal goals for health and well-being. Beginning in 2029, the Council shall submit an updated report every two years until 2039 that includes new policy recommendations, the status of policy adoption, and any revisions to the statewide vision and universal goals included in the initial report.

The Council may:

- use topics and findings from health impact reviews to inform the council's priorities, strategies, and recommendations;
- use disaggregated data to inform its work;
- develop policy positions; and
- form advisory committees or implement participatory models, such as collaboratives or community assemblies, to support the Council in gathering information and developing policy priorities, recommendations, and positions.

These groups may include members of the community and state agencies.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2025.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The state must continue and recommit to its work addressing health disparities. The changes to the Council will incorporate a variety of voices. This is strategic work to make the entire state healthier.

CON: Racism is not a public health crisis and this approach diverts resources from important issues. The changes to the Council will result in unnecessary cost.

OTHER: The Council should include a voice advocating for men and boys, who experience a number of health disparities.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Marcus Riccelli, Prime Sponsor; Linh Huynh, Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities; Victor Rodriguez, Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities; Lydia Faitalia, WA State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs; Sili Savusa, Pacific Islander Community Association of WA.

CON: Mary Long, Conservative Ladies of Washington.

OTHER: Blair Daly, Washington Initiative for Boys and Men.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.