

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6116

As Passed Senate, February 8, 1996

Title: An act relating to disclosure of health care information without patient's authorization.

Brief Description: Providing for a certain disclosure of health care information without patient's authorization.

Sponsors: Senators Thibaudeau, Haugen and Winsley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/23/96, 1/25/96 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/8/96, 45-3.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Wojahn, Vice Chair; Deccio, Fairley, Franklin, Moyer, Thibaudeau, Winsley and Wood.

Staff: Joanne Conrad (786-7472)

Background: Health care providers are required to disclose health care information about patients, without their consent, to public health and law enforcement authorities in order to safeguard public health and assist in criminal justice and other legal investigations. Providers are reluctant to disclose such information except in clear and limited circumstances in order to protect their patients, and to prevent legal liability.

Summary of Bill: In order to facilitate death investigations, county coroners and medical examiners are added to public health authorities and law enforcement authorities as entities to which health care providers must disclose health care information without a patient's consent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Clarified statutory language is needed to assure providers making disclosure.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Thibaudeau, prime sponsor; Judy Arnold, Thurston Co. coroner.