

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6704

As Passed Senate, February 13, 1996

Title: An act relating to the use of telecommunications in the medical industry.

Brief Description: Relating to the use of telecommunications in the medical industry.

Sponsors: Senator Sutherland.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Energy, Telecommunications & Utilities: 1/29/96, 1/31/96 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/13/96, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, TELECOMMUNICATIONS & UTILITIES

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Sutherland, Chair; Loveland, Vice Chair; Finkbeiner, Hochstatter and Owen.

Staff: Phil Moeller (786-7445)

Background: The term "telemedicine" refers to using modern telecommunications services and equipment, often including high bandwidth networks, to diagnose medical patients located apart from the person diagnosing the patient. Telemedicine offers benefits to rural areas that lack the specialists or facilities of urban areas.

Some rural areas of the state lack the telecommunications infrastructure to fully take advantage of telemedicine. Other questions have arisen pertaining to common technical standards and legal issues pertaining to remote diagnosis of patients.

Summary of Bill: By November 1, 1997, the state Board of Health is directed to complete a study on the current and potential use of telemedicine in the state. The study is to include recommended changes in rules and statutes so as to expand the use of telemedicine in the state.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 29, 1996.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: No one.