

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6522

As of February 5, 1998

Title: An act relating to increasing access for maternity care coverage.

Brief Description: Regarding coverage for maternity care.

Sponsors: Senators Wojahn, Winsley, Thibaudeau, Wood, Hale, B. Sheldon, Patterson, Heavey, Prentice, Rasmussen, Bauer, Brown, Fairley, Spanel, Kohl and Goings.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/5/98.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Jonathan Seib (786-7427)

Background: Under current law, a health carrier is not required to provide coverage for maternity services. However, every carrier that does provide coverage is required to do so only according to certain specified standards. Among other things, the standards require that length of stay be determined by the attending physician, and that covered eligible services not be denied for inpatient, post-delivery care to a mother and her newly born child for the care ordered by the attending physician.

Summary of Bill: Every policy issued by a health carrier that provides hospital, surgical, or medical coverage must provide coverage for maternity care under the same terms and conditions that coverage is provided for illness or disease. Maternity care coverage must also include parent education, assistance and training in breast or bottle feeding and the performance of any necessary maternal and newborn clinical assessments.

The standards which currently apply to optional maternity coverage are made applicable to the required coverage.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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