

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6439

---

As Passed Senate, February 14, 2000

**Title:** An act relating to consistent use of terms regarding state hospital patient status.

**Brief Description:** Changing terminology in the release from commitment of persons in mental treatment facilities.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Long, Hargrove and Sheahan; by request of Department of Social and Health Services).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Human Services & Corrections: 2/1/2000 [DPS].  
Passed Senate, 2/14/2000, 47-0.

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6439 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Costa, Vice Chair; Franklin, Kohl-Welles, Long, Stevens and Zarelli.

**Staff:** Fara Daun (786-7459)

**Background:** The current language of chapters 71.05 and 10.77 RCW does not differentiate between the legal and medical status of mental health patients. The code inconsistently uses terms, and sometimes mixes terms that have civil or criminal meanings with terms that have financial and medical meanings. This can jeopardize federal reimbursement for patient care.

**Summary of Bill:** No substantive changes are made. The medical status terms admission and discharge and the legal status terms commitment, conditional release, detention, and release are added and defined. It is clarified whether legal or medical status is intended by the statute by amending some terms.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** This is a technical bill that makes no substantive changes and the department agrees with the language in the substitute bill.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Pat Terry, Acting Director Mental Health Division, DSHS, pro.