

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1347

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Commerce & Labor*

Title: An act relating to leave from employment to care for children.

Brief Description: Allowing employees to use sick leave to care for children under one year of age.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Cole, Prentice, Winsley, Heavey, Wood, Anderson, R. King, Jacobsen, Brough, Edmondson, Miller, Paris, G. Fisher, Ludwig, Pruitt, Phillips, Sprenkle and Brekke.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Commerce & Labor, February 19, 1991, DP.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE & LABOR**

Majority Report: *Do pass.* Signed by 8 members: Representatives Heavey, Chair; Cole, Vice Chair; Franklin; Jones; R. King; O'Brien; Prentice; and Vance.

Minority Report: *Do not pass.* Signed by 3 members: Representatives Fuhrman, Chair; Lisk, Vice Chair; and Wilson.

Staff: Chris Cordes (786-7117).

Background: In 1988, on the recommendation of the Select Committee on Employment and the Family, legislation was enacted that permits an employee to use his or her accrued sick leave to care for the employee's child. The child must be under the age of 18 and have a health condition requiring treatment or supervision.

Summary of Bill: In addition to using accrued sick leave to care for an employee's child with a health condition requiring treatment or supervision, an employee may use his or her accrued sick leave to care for any child of the employee under one year of age.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 8, 1991.

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

Testimony For: The family care bill allows employees to use their sick leave to care for children with a "health condition." Children with a "health condition" should be interpreted to include very young children. However, some employers are not allowing employees to use their sick leave to care for the child unless the infant is sick. Because day care is very difficult to find for infants, employees should be allowed to use their sick leave. This would reduce many of the stresses that working parents face.

Testimony Against: The family care bill was intended to allow employees to use their own sick leave to care for their sick child. The law was not intended as a substitute for family leave, vacation leave, or other kinds of leave that parents may use to care for children. Under the current law, employers have the right to ask for a medical statement to show that the child was ill. This helps prevent abuse of the law. If sick leave can be used for a healthy child, employers will have no way of controlling whether sick leave is being used appropriately.

Witnesses: Dave Westberg and George Wolanin , International Union of Engineers (in favor); Clif Finch, Association of Washington Business (opposed); Jan Gee, Washington Retail Association (opposed); and Kathleen Collins, Association of Washington Cities (opposed).