

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## ESSB 6069

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*As Reported By House Committee on:  
Health Care*

**Title:** An act relating to bone marrow donor program.

**Brief Description:** Creating a bone marrow donor program.

**Sponsor(s):** By Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Snyder, Conner, Wojahn, West, L. Smith, M. Kreidler, Talmadge, Rasmussen, Johnson, Gaspard and Skratek).

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Health Care, February 26, 1992, DP.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
HEALTH CARE**

**Majority Report:** *Do pass.* Signed by 8 members: Representatives Braddock, Chair; Moyer, Ranking Minority Member; Cantwell; Edmondson; Franklin; Morris; Paris; and Prentice.

**Staff:** Antonio Sanchez (786-7383).

**Background:** For many of the estimated 16,000 Americans diagnosed each year with leukemia, aplastic anemia and other fatal blood diseases, a bone marrow transplant can be a lifesaving procedure. For the transplant to be successful, it is important that the patient's genetic markers (HLA antigens) closely match those of the donor. Less than 40 percent of patients who need marrow transplants have a suitably matched related donor able to donate marrow. To expand the donor pool, transplants using bone marrow from an unrelated donor were begun in the 1970s. Despite the success of this technological advance, the chances of any two unrelated individuals having matching HLA antigens range between 1:100 to less than 1:1 million. This problem is even more acute for ethnic minorities.

Donor registries have been established for facilitating searches for suitably matched volunteer donors. The National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) was established in 1986 through a contract with the federal government and maintains a computerized registry listing more than 450,000 potential

donors. In addition to its clinical activities, NMDP educates the public about bone marrow transplantation and recruits new volunteers for the national registry through its educational campaigns.

**Summary of Bill:** A statewide bone marrow donor education and recruitment program is established to increase the number of Washington residents who may become bone marrow donors, and to increase the chance that patients in need of bone marrow transplants will find a suitable bone marrow match.

The Department of Health is required to establish a bone marrow donor recruitment and education program to educate state residents about the need for bone marrow donors, the procedures required to become registered as a potential bone marrow donor, and the procedures a donor must undergo to donate bone marrow or other sources of blood stem cells.

The Department of Health is also required to make special efforts to educate and recruit minorities to volunteer as potential bone marrow donors. To accomplish this the department is encouraged to use press, radio, and television, and direct the placement of educational materials in appropriate health care facilities, blood banks, and state and local agencies.

The Department of Health, in conjunction with the Department of Licensing, must make educational materials available at all places where driver licenses are issued or renewed.

The Department of Health must make special efforts to educate and recruit state employees to volunteer as potential bone marrow donors. These efforts must include, but not be limited to, conducting a bone marrow donor drive. The drive must include educational materials furnished by the National Marrow Donor Program. Specific funding for the purposes of the act must be provided by June 30, 1992 or the act shall be null and void.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** This measure is needed to increase the donor pool, especially for ethnic minorities. This bill is a positive attempt to deal with this problem, however, funds are needed to appropriately conduct the mandates of the measure as outlined.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Mandy Church, American Red Cross Bone Marrow Recruitment (pro); Martha Shulenberger, Puget Sound Blood Center (pro); and Jo Wadsworth, Department of Health (pro).