

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 2813

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE,
FEBRUARY 24, 1992**

Brief Description: Allowing the transfer of the state law enforcement officers and fire fighters retirement system to the state health care authority.

SPONSORS: Representatives Bowman, Prentice, Riley, Braddock, Cantwell, Van Luven and Brumsickle

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators West, Chairman; L. Smith, Vice Chairman; M. Kreidler, Niemi, Sumner, and Wojahn.

Staff: Scott Plack (786-7409)

Hearing Dates: February 24, 1992

BACKGROUND:

When the Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Retirement System (LEOFF) was created in 1970 (LEOFF-I), the law required local governmental entities to provide full 24 hour health benefit coverage. When the State Employee Insurance Board (SEIB), predecessor of the Health Care Authority (HCA), was created, LEOFF was excluded in an effort to avoid that potentiality of high cost responsibility, even though other local governmental employee groups, eventually, were given the option of participating.

In recent years, several developments occurred that made LEOFF participation in the HCA plan advantageous: (1) LEOFF-II, created in 1976, did not require health coverage; (2) retiree coverage, required in LEOFF I, has become difficult to obtain other than through the HCA; and (3) local governments, which covered non-LEOFF employees through the HCA, have been finding it increasingly difficult to obtain separate coverage for LEOFF employees.

Presently, there are 4,363 active member in LEOFF I and 6,899 in LEOFF II.

SUMMARY:

To permit LEOFF enrollment in the HCA plan, current law that prohibits LEOFF participation in the HCA benefits plan is deleted. However, participation in the HCA by LEOFF members is subject to collective bargaining rights.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested February 20, 1992

TESTIMONY FOR:

The bill will allow law enforcement agencies to purchase health care insurance through the HCA at more affordable rates because they can be pooled with other state employees.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Randy Hamilton, WA Assn. of Sheriffs & Police (pro)