SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5634

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE,
MARCH 6, 1991

Brief Description: Requiring that dentists' offices comply
with requirements for sterilization of equipment and infection
control.

SPONSORS: Senators Cantu, Bailey and A. Smith.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5634 be
substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.
Signed by Senators West, Chairman; L. Smith, Vice
Chairman; Amondson, Johnson, L. Kreidler, Niemi, and Wojahn.

Staff: Don Sloma (786-7414)

Hearing Dates: March 6, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Current law states that it is a dentist's "duty" to keep his
or her office and dental equipment in a "... thoroughly clean
and sanitary condition..." (18.32.725 RCW). However, there
are no specific standards or definitions regarding this
requirement. In addition, it is unclear which sanctions may
be imposed if "duties" are not performed.

Some have expressed concern about sanitary standards and
enforcement in dentists' offices in the wake of reports of HIV
infection transmitted by a dentist to several of his patients
while performing dental work.

SUMMARY:

The Dental Disciplinary Board must adopt rules establishing
minimum requirements for sterilization of equipment and
infection control in dentists' offices. In adopting the
rules, the board must consider national standards, including
those adopted for surgical procedures.

Dentists must comply with these standards. Failure to comply
is defined as unprofessional conduct.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

An appropriation from the health professions account is added
to the bill in the amount of $49,000.

Appropriation: $49,000

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

Public concern regarding HIV infection and other infectious diseases makes it necessary to establish specific standards for sterilization in dental offices and clear guidance to regulatory authorities regarding penalties.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Senator Cantu (pro)