

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESB 5205

As Reported By House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to infant mortality review.

Brief Description: Modifying review of infant and child mortality rates.

Sponsors: Senators Wojahn, Moyer, Sheldon, Erwin, Fraser, Winsley, Prentice, Niemi and Talmadge.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Health Care, March 26, 1993, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Dellwo, Chair; L. Johnson, Vice Chair; Dyer, Ranking Minority Member; Appelwick; Campbell; Conway; Cooke; Flemming; R. Johnson; Lisk; Mastin; Morris; Thibaudeau; and Veloria.

Staff: Bill Hagens (786-7131).

Background: Due to a high rate of infant mortality in this state, the Legislature recently authorized local health departments to create infant mortality review teams. The teams review infant deaths to identify and address the preventable causes of infant mortality.

All records, reports, and statements procured or used by the review teams are confidential. This material is protected from discovery in all legal proceedings. Local health department officials and employees, and review team members are immune from any legal proceedings which concern the mortality review.

It has been suggested that the process used in examining infant mortality cases may also be useful in examining and addressing the causes of death for children 18 years of age and younger.

Summary of Bill: Local health departments are authorized to conduct child mortality reviews for all deaths of children under age 18. The records and reports used for the reviews

remain confidential and may not be discovered in any legal proceedings.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This bill will help prevent deaths of children through the use of qualified investigative teams. Participants on mortality review teams may include: DSHS, CPS, police officers, sheriffs, coroners, doctors, nurses and prosecutors. The teams have been very effective in reviewing infant death cases. These reviews can be conducted without any additional cost to the state.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: None.