

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1541

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to emergency medical services.

Brief Description: Requiring continuing emergency medical technician training instead of recertification.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Orr, Flemming, King, Dellwo and Mielke.)

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Health Care, February 19, 1993, DPS;
Passed House, March 10, 1993, 96-0;
Amended by Senate;
Passed Legislature, April 24, 1993, 94-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Dellwo, Chair; L. Johnson, Vice Chair; Dyer, Ranking Minority Member; Ballasiotes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appelwick; Campbell; Conway; Cooke; Flemming; R. Johnson; Lisk; Mastin; Morris; Thibaudeau; and Veloria.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background: The responsibilities of first responders and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are regulated by the state. First responders and EMTs are emergency medical personnel who provide basic life-support in emergency situations. First responders have at least 44 hours of training, and EMTs have 110 hours of training. They are required to be certified by the Department of Health, and recertified thereafter triennially. For the purposes of recertification, both a written and practical examination are given. However, if the applicant has passed a written examination and has completed a program of ongoing training and evaluation, no practical examination is required.

Summary of Bill: First responders and emergency medical technicians are not required to pass written and practical examinations for the purpose of recertification so long as

they meet ongoing training requirements, including appropriate evaluation for individual skills, as adopted by the secretary of health, and as approved by the county medical program director. However, emergency medical personnel or the emergency medical service provider may request written and practical examination in lieu of the ongoing training program and must meet continuing education requirements.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: There is no need to take written and practical examinations every three years for recertification because emergency medical personnel acquire these skills practically in daily experience. Taking ongoing training and evaluation is important and appropriate for maintaining their state-of-the-art skills.

Testimony Against: In the original bill the requirement for recertification is removed. Recertification should be required. Any requirement for ongoing training should be tied to both an evaluation for individual skills and approval of the county medical program directors who supervise emergency medical personnel.

Witnesses: Representative George Orr, prime sponsor (pro); Cody Arledge, WSCFF (pro); Otto Jensen, state fire chiefs (pro); John Sinclair, WSAFC EMS Division (pro); Susie Tracy, Christy Horton, and Byron Byrne, King County Emergency Medical Services (con); Cindy Hambly, Thurston County Medic One (con); Rick Newbrey, Seattle Medic One (con); David Hutsell, Northwest Regional EMS and Trauma Council (con); and Janet Griffith, Department of Health (con).