

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6141

As Passed House
March 2, 1994

Title: An act relating to composition of the public employees' benefits board.

Brief Description: Changing the start up date of the new composition for the public employees' benefits board.

Sponsors: Senators Talmadge, Moyer, Gaspard, Sellar, Wojahn and Winsley.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Health Care, February 22, 1994, DP.
Passed House, March 2, 1994, 95-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Dellwo, Chair; L. Johnson, Vice Chair; Dyer, Ranking Minority Member; Ballasiotes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Conway; Cooke; Flemming; R. Johnson; Lemmon; Lisk; Mastin; Morris; Thibaudeau and Veloria.

Staff: Bill Hagens (786-7131).

Background: Under current law, the Public Employee Benefits Board is composed of seven members: three from active and retired state employee groups, three with experience in health benefit management and cost containment, and the administrator of the state Health Care Authority. The board is charged with, among other things, designing the benefits and determining the terms and conditions of employee participation and coverage for public employee health benefit plans.

Currently, the Public Employee Benefits Board exercises control over some state funded school district health benefit plans as well. Under current law, by 1995, all state funded school district employee health benefits must be determined by the Public Employee Benefits Board in a manner consistent with state law. The board is presently working with the Health Care Authority administrator and others to plan for this transition.

Under current law, the board will expand to nine in January 1995, adding two school employee representatives and one additional person with experience in health benefit management and cost containment. At that time, one state employee representative will be removed from the board.

Some have suggested this change in composition should be accomplished immediately in order to provide for more formal participation by school district employees in planning the transition.

Summary of Bill: Effective immediately, the Public Employee Benefits Board is expanded from seven to nine members by removing one state employee representative, adding two school district employee representatives, one of who must be retired, and by adding one additional person with experience in health benefit management and cost containment.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The bill is needed to allow K-12 employees and retirees to participate in planning for the Health Care Authority purchasing their health benefits beginning in July 1995.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Karen Davis, Washington Education Association (pro); Wayne Mann, Washington State Retired Teachers Association (pro); and Senator Talmadge, prime sponsor.