

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SHB 1817**

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE, APRIL 2, 1993**

**Brief Description:** Directing the department of corrections to review the offender health care system.

**SPONSORS:** House Committee on Corrections (originally sponsored by Representatives L. Johnson, Morris, Long, Edmondson, Valle, Rayburn, Karahalios, Riley, Springer, Campbell and Cothorn)

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE**

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators A. Smith, Chairman; McCaslin, Nelson, Niemi, Rinehart, and Roach.

**Staff:** Tom Fender (786-7414)

**Hearing Dates:** April 2, 1993

**BACKGROUND:**

The Department of Corrections is currently facing an unprecedented growth in its inmate population. The costs associated with housing, feeding, clothing, and caring for offenders in our state corrections system is increasing commensurate with the growing prison population. These costs are approximately \$26,000 per prisoner per year.

One of the most significantly rising costs in our prison system is inmate health care. Since 1986, the health care expenditures for inmates in prison have doubled. They have gone from \$10.97 million in 1986 to \$22.23 million in 1992. In 1992 alone, health care costs increased by 14 percent. These costs are expected to continue to rise as medical costs inflate, the prison population grows, and an increasing number of inmates become older and need additional health and long-term care.

Currently the Department of Corrections is required to provide and pay for health care for all inmates. These services include essential medical care, dental care, mental health treatment, prescription services, laboratory procedures, and radiological procedures.

The Department of Corrections maintains a data base on offender health care provided in its facilities; however, a more comprehensive range of utilization and cost information

needs to be available for adequate cost and quality of care analysis and future health care reform planning.

**SUMMARY:**

The Department of Corrections is required to review and submit a report on the scope, nature, and cost of its inmate health care system.

The report must also include descriptive information on the current capabilities of its health care information system and, to the extent possible, recommendations and a working plan for developing a fully integrated health care information system using shared resources with other state agencies or hospitals.

The department is required to investigate a range of potential cost savings options.

The department is also required to consult with the state Health Care Authority to establish plans for transitioning the department inmate health care system into the health care system reform measures currently under development.

By September 1, 1993, an initial report must be submitted by the Department of Corrections to the Department of Health, Department of Social and Health Services, and the Health Care Authority for review and written comments on how additional savings can be made. The final report must be submitted to the Legislature by December 12, 1993. An emergency is declared.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested

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

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

This data is required to manage inmate health care costs.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Representative L. Johnson, prime sponsor