

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**ESB 5205**

**AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 17, 1993**

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

**SPONSORS:** Senators Wojahn, Moyer, Sheldon, Erwin, Fraser, Winsley, Prentice, Niemi and Talmadge

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Talmadge, Chairman; Wojahn, Vice Chairman; Deccio, Erwin, Franklin, Fraser, Hargrove, McAuliffe, McDonald, Moyer, Niemi, Prentice, Quigley, Sheldon, L. Smith, and Winsley.

**Staff:** Richard Rodger (786-7461)

**Hearing Dates:** January 26, 1993; January 27, 1993

**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:**

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.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** available

**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

**TESTIFIED:** Dr. John Beare, Spokane County Health District; Audrey Dickson, R.N., Seattle/King County Health Department