

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 6516**

**AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 11, 1994**

**Brief Description:** Creating the Warren Featherstone Reid award for excellence in health care.

**SPONSORS:** Senators West, Talmadge, Moyer, Snyder and Anderson

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

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

**Staff:** Don Sloma (786-7319)

**Hearing Dates:** February 2, 1994

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE**

**BACKGROUND:**

The debate over how to organize, finance and deliver personal health services has raged in Washington State and at the national level since Franklin Delano Roosevelt first suggested a national health plan as part of the New Deal in the 1930s. During much of that time our state has been a leader and innovator. Seattle and Spokane are not only recognized as Northwest regional capitals of medical research and training, with facilities such as the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and the Warren G. Magnuson Health Sciences Center, they also serve as home to Group Health Cooperative, internationally known as a model health maintenance organization.

Our rural areas as well have contributed greatly to our state's heritage as a leader in health policy and practice. Yakima County is the home of the first city/county health department in the United States. And our state's network of rural hospitals and training programs for health care providers in rural and medically underserved areas rank with the best developed in the nation.

Passage of the Washington Health Services Act of 1993 once again placed our state at the forefront of health care system innovation. But many are concerned that the act's emphasis on universal access to care and cost containment may compromise the quality of health care our citizens enjoy. Some have suggested that regular public recognition of extraordinary efforts to maintain quality in health care can have a sentinel effect. As providers see these examples of quality, they will emulate them, thereby improving quality overall.

Naming such an award for a long time state legislative and congressional staff person whose career was dedicated to improved health care practice and availability has been suggested as appropriate to the purpose of the award.

Warren Featherstone Reid was raised in Wenatchee, Washington, and educated at Wenatchee Community College and George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He received his J.D. in 1961 from the University of Washington. "Feather" joined the staff of the Washington State Legislature in 1955 and remained in public service until 1993, when he retired from the Washington State Senate staff. During that time, he served our state as congressional aide, staff to the state Legislature, trusted advisor to Senator Warren G. Magnuson, and Governor Booth Gardner, and policy expert for countless state and federal officials.

During his career, Mr. Reid assisted Senator Magnuson for almost 20 years as his trusted aide and chief of staff in a sustained effort to advance the science and practice of medicine by expanding federal financial support for medical research through the National Cancer Institute, the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health, and by helping to establish the Nurse Training Act, the National Health Service Corps, and the National Health Manpower Act. He advised Congress on countless health policy initiatives including Medicare and Medicaid.

Upon his return to the Washington State Senate in 1981, Feather became staff for Senator Jim McDermott and the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, specializing in health policy. In 1988, he became a key health policy advisor to Governor Booth Gardner. His efforts were central in several Washington State efforts to improve health care until his retirement in 1993. These included development of the Basic Health Plan, modifications to the Hospital Commission, changes to the manner in which the state purchases health care and passage of the Washington Health Services Act of 1993.

Featherstone Reid is presently enjoying his retirement in travel and leisure from his home in Seattle.

**SUMMARY:**

The Warren Featherstone Reid Award for Excellence in Health Care is created to recognize cost-effective and quality health care services.

The Governor must bestow the award annually upon those health care providers practicing in Washington State whose actual delivery of health care services exemplifies the highest achievements in consumer satisfaction, quality measurement, cost-efficiency, innovation, leadership, and other factors deemed appropriate by the Governor.

The Governor must produce an application booklet for the award that encourages self examination on these criteria. An

advisory committee may be appointed to assist in the selection of honorees.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

The award is an excellent way to promote positive developments in our health care system. Feather Reid is an excellent personification of efforts towards outstanding quality in health care.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** PRO: Dave Broderick, Hospital Association; Sam Hunt

**HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):**

Major responsibility for implementation is placed with the Secretary of the Department of Health instead of the Governor. Language is added to clarify that the award need only be given annually if there are qualified nominees. The secretary is directed to seek grants and gifts to assist in financing the cost of implementation.