

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 2465

As Passed House:

February 11, 1998

Title: An act relating to health care providers' communication with patients.

Brief Description: Expanding the privileged communication from physician-patient to the health care provider and patient privilege.

Sponsors: Representatives Dyer, Cody, Backlund, L. Thomas and Cooke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 1/29/98 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/11/98, 95-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Dyer, Chairman; Backlund, Vice Chairman; Skinner, Vice Chairman; Cody, Ranking Minority Member; Murray, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson; Conway; Parlette; Sherstad; Wood and Zellinsky.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background: Under current law, a physician or osteopathic physician generally enjoys the physician-patient privilege whereby the physician may not be compelled in a civil action before a court of law to disclose information acquired from a patient which was necessary in treating the patient.

This right of privileged or confidential communication however does not extend to other health providers under state law.

Summary of Bill: The right of privileged or confidential communication is extended to podiatric physicians regulated by the Department of Health and they may not be compelled to disclose in a civil action information acquired from a patient which was necessary to treat a patient.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: All health providers should have the right of confidential communications with their patients protected. It encourages the patient to fully relate their problems without fear of exposure.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Melanie Stewart, Washington State Podiatric Medicine Association (pro).