HOUSE BILL REPORT
HJM 4009

As Passed House
March 13, 1997

Brief Description: Expediting the FDA's approval of new products.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Sherstad, Backlund, Cody, Thompson, O'Brien, D. Schmidt, Lambert and Skinner).

Brief History:
Committee Activity:
Health Care: 2/14/97 [DP].
Floor Activity:
Passed House: 3/13/97, 96-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Dyer, Chairman; Backlund, Vice Chairman; Skinner, Vice Chairman; Cody, Ranking Minority Member; Conway; Parlette; Sherstad; Wood and Zellinsky.

Staff: Antonio Sanchez (786-7383).

Background: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is responsible for developing and administering the approval process for new medicines. The FDA approval process helps ensure that new drugs are safe and effective for the public. The average length of time it took to approve the 28 new drugs introduced for FDA approval in 1995 was 19.2 months. There are approximately 700 medicines in development that are awaiting approval for commercial use from the Federal Drug Administration.

Summary of Bill: The Washington State Legislature requests that the United States Congress enact comprehensive legislation to increase patient access to quality health care and technological innovations by insuring the rapid approval of new drugs, biological products, and medical devices without compromising patient safety or product effectiveness.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: Shortening the approval process will get needed life-saving drugs to the public quicker and at a lower cost.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Sherstad, prime sponsor (pro); and Cliff Webster, Pharmaceutical Research & Manufacturers of America (pro).