

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2264

Brief Description: Eliminating the health care policy board.

Background: The Health Care Policy Board (HCPB) was created in 1995 as a successor to the Health Services Commission. The creation of the HCPB and elimination of the Commission reflected the changes in direction of health care reform made by the 1995 legislation. The HCPB is composed of five full-time members appointed by the governor and four part-time members, appointed by the four caucuses of the House and Senate.

The HCPB is responsible for making policy recommendations to the Governor and Legislature on a variety of health care issues. In particular, state law lists about two dozen specific topics that the HCPB is to report on, including individual and group insurance, long-term care, rural health care, medical education, community rating of health insurance, model billing and claims forms, quality improvement efforts, and other topics.

The HCPB also has authority to grant and administer immunities from antitrust laws for health care service organizations. In recent years, the health care market has seen consolidation as a way to contain costs without diminishing quality of care. The HCPB receives, analyzes, and grants petitions for immunity from anti-trust laws and supervises those organizations receiving immunity to ensure that the immune conduct continues to further the state's health care goals.

In total, nine petitions for anti-trust immunity have been received since 1993, four have been granted, and the HCPB currently monitors the four organizations granted immunity.

The Health Services Account provides funding for the HCPB. In the 1997-99 biennium, if no changes are made to expenditures from that account, there will be a deficit of about \$180 million.

Summary: The Health Care Policy Board is eliminated. The section transferring the Health Services Commission's responsibilities to the HCPB is repealed, however, the anti-trust monitoring activities remain in statute as a responsibility of the Health Services Commission.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

