SENATE BILL REPORT

HJM 4009

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 25, 1997

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

Sponsors: Representatives Sherstad, Backlund, Cody, Thompson, O'Brien, D. Schmidt, Lambert and Skinner.

Brief History:
Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/19/97, 3/25/97 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.
Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Benton and Strannigan.

Staff: Jonathan Seib (786-7427)

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: This memorial is similar to one passed in 26 other states. It addresses concerns regarding the substantial length of time it takes for FDA approval of new drugs. Washington state, with dozens of biotech firms, has a particular interest in the concerns addressed in the memorial. FDA delay in drug approval effects these companies competitiveness and ultimately is significant to consumers.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Gary Franklin, Department of Labor and Industries; Cliff Webster, Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.