

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6373

As of January 27, 1998

Title: An act relating to an end-of-life care center.

Brief Description: Establishing the Washington state end-of-life care center.

Sponsors: Senators Wood, Thibaudeau, Franklin, McAuliffe, Brown, Prentice, Snyder, Rasmussen, Kohl, Oke and Swecker.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/28/98.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Joanne Conrad (786-7472)

Background: There is growing concern in society regarding the treatment of the dying. Patients and their families, the medical and legal communities, and the Legislature have increasingly entered into policy discussions regarding death and dying. Pain management, palliative care, medical and public education, and improved clinical care for children have all been the subjects of recent studies and conferences.

The focus on end of life issues includes hundreds of Washington State children who suffer from life-limiting conditions requiring special care. Many cannot receive this type of care in their local communities, and may rely upon specialized skills and facilities in the Seattle area.

Summary of Bill: The Washington State End of Life Resource Center is established. The goals of the center are to improve medical education regarding death and dying, and to increase public understanding of advance directives and care options. The center acts as a public-private partnership and is located at the University of Washington.

A board of directors governs the center. Directors include representatives of the University of Washington School of Medicine and School of Nursing, as well as a patient advocate, and representatives of the Attorney General, the Insurance Commissioner and the Department of Health. One director is appointed by agreement between the House and the Senate.

The center is authorized to seek grants from public and private foundations and organizations. The center also directs a Pediatric Palliative Care Center, in cooperation with Children's Hospital and the Medical Center affiliated with the University of Washington. The Pediatric Palliative Care Center works to improve palliative care curricula, and to assist health care professionals, through education and training, to improve clinical practice regarding pain and symptom management for children. A goal of the care center is better coordination of care. The center provides connectivity for statewide resources for those caring for dying children.

Appropriation: Unspecified.

Fiscal Note: Requested.

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