

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 6172

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**As Reported By House Committee On:**  
Health Care

**Title:** An act relating to bone marrow donation.

**Brief Description:** Allowing minors to donate bone marrow.

**Sponsors:** Senators Fraser, Deccio, Thibaudeau, Prentice, T. Sheldon, Kohl-Welles, Fairley, McAuliffe and Oke.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Health Care: 2/25/00 [DP].

<p><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Allows minors under the age of 18 to be bone marrow donors.</li></ul>
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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Cody, Democratic Co-Chair; Parlette, Republican Co-Chair; Pflug, Republican Vice Chair; Schual-Berke, Democratic Vice Chair; Alexander; Campbell; Conway; Edmonds; Edwards; Pennington and Ruderman.

**Minority Report:** Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Mulliken.

**Staff:** Antonio Sanchez (786-7383).

**Background:**

The National Marrow Donor Program does not permit testing people under the age of 18 to determine compatibility for bone marrow donation. The reason cited has been that minors are not considered competent to provide informed consent to the medical procedures. The age and maturity of the minor have not been sufficient exceptions to

the policy, despite the fact that teenage minors can consent to certain kinds of medical care.

Attention was focused on this policy by the media when North Thurston High School sophomore Alden Tucker was refused testing to see if he was a bone marrow match for his friend Michael Penon. Through private efforts, testing was finally performed, but he was not a match. Michael Penon ultimately died of complications of leukemia.

Alden Tucker has not been listed on the national registry despite a recognized need for increased minority representation on the registry. The National Marrow Donor Program indicates that most minorities who search the registry, with its current donor pool, are less likely to find a marrow match than Caucasians. Some estimate nearly a 40 percent difference.

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**Summary of Bill:**

Minors under the age of 18 cannot be disqualified from being a bone marrow donor.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Minors under the age of 18 should be allowed to save another person's life. If minors can have liposuction and other medical procedures, they should be able to donate lifesaving bone marrow.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Senator Fraser, prime sponsor; Angela Tucker; Alden Tucker; and Lora Cooper.