

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1371

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care March 31, 1999

Title: An act relating to reporting, treatment, and payment for treatment of tuberculosis.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions that concern the control and prevention of tuberculosis.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Ruderman, Alexander and O'Brien; by request of Department of Health).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/18/99, 3/31/99 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Costa, Deccio, Franklin, Johnson and Winsley.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: The Department of Health and local health departments are responsible for controlling the spread of tuberculosis (TB), a highly contagious and potentially fatal disease. State law authorizes the department to investigate, report, and track suspected and identified cases of TB and to order measures for the control of its spread.

Parts of current law directing public health authorities on the management of TB are outdated. Treatment and prevention measures have changed significantly over the past decade and some language in current law does not reflect these advanced treatment practices.

Pertinent laws related to controlling the spread of TB are crucial because the disease is not extinct. While the number of cases has dropped significantly through the use of new medications, TB continues to pose a threat to the people of our state. In 1997 there were 307 cases of TB in Washington.

Summary of Amended Bill: Antiquated language regarding TB treatment and control is updated. Laboratory services are included as part of what needs to be provided when treating TB.

Reporting requirements are revised to conform to current reporting practices for other diseases which must be reported to the department within one day of detection. The list of individuals who can diagnose TB is clarified to include advanced registered nurse practitioners or licensed physician assistants.

Language is added stating that no county is required to budget for TB patients who cannot pay for their care.

Eight RCW sections which are no longer applicable to current TB control and treatment practices are repealed.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The striker has a technical change to connect a drafting error.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill will bring statute law in line with current practice.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Patty Hayes, DOH.