

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1864

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, April 1, 1999

Title: An act relating to the registration of surgical technologists.

Brief Description: Providing for the registration of surgical technologists.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Cody, Boldt, Campbell, Wood and Koster).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 4/1/99 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

Background: Surgical technologists assist surgeons in the surgical setting by preserving a sterile surgical environment and in handing instruments to the surgeon.

Pursuant to recommendations from a 1996 sunrise review, the Department of Health convened a workgroup to discuss surgical assisting services. The workgroup concluded that all individuals functioning in surgical assist roles with the exception of surgical technologists were already regulated; therefore, the State Board of Health and the Department of Health support regulation of surgical technologists to bring them under the authority of the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

Summary of Bill: Anyone who uses the title surgical technologist or performs surgical technology must register with the Department of Health. Registration brings them within the Uniform Disciplinary Act. The Department of Health is given rulemaking authority. Exceptions to registration exist for surgical technologists in an educational setting and in the military.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 15, 1999.

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

Testimony For: Registration of surgical technologists protects public health and safety. The bill is agreed to by the interested parties.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Janice Olmsted, Surgical Tech. of WA St (pro); LeeAnn Whetchel, Tacoma Surgical Tech. (pro); Terry Kohl, Assn. of Operating Room Nurses (pro).