

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2683

As of February 12, 2000

Title: An act relating to the protection of patients in state hospitals.

Brief Description: Protecting patients in state hospitals.

Sponsors: Representatives Conway, Cody, Haigh and O'Brien; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/17/2000.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

Background: In 1999, the Legislature revised, standardized, and streamlined statutes involving vulnerable adults (SHB 1620). In that legislation, references to nursing homes and adult family homes were deleted from RCW 70.124 and placed with other nursing home law. Once the nursing homes were removed from this chapter, the title of RCW 70.124 (Abuse of Patients "Nursing Homes, State Hospitals) was no longer accurate. Furthermore, the issue of abuse of patients in state hospitals was isolated and separate from all other law relating to state hospitals making the law regarding abuse of patients at state hospitals incongruent with that on vulnerable adults. For many in this setting, both laws would apply at the same time resulting in two different ways to collect and report abuse.

Summary of Bill: All language relevant to abuse of patients in state hospitals currently in RCW 70.124 is removed and relocated into its appropriate section (RCW 72.23). The content related to abuse of patients in nursing homes removed by the Legislature in 1999 (SHB 1620) and that related to state hospitals removed in this legislation is repealed and eliminated.

Language about abuse to vulnerable adults has been added to appropriate sections of the law so that the requirements are consistent between hospital patients and vulnerable adults.

The definition of "licensed physician" has been modified to include only medical doctors and osteopathic physicians, making language congruent with state hospital hiring policy.

Other technical changes are made, including deletion of Northern State Hospital, as it was closed years ago, and making language clearer in the section related to protection for employees who make reports.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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