

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5777

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As Passed Senate, March 13, 1999

**Title:** An act relating to payment for denturist services.

**Brief Description:** Addressing payment for denturist services.

**Sponsors:** Senators Prentice and Winsley.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions: 3/2/99, 3/2/99 [DP].

Passed Senate, 3/13/99, 44-0.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, TRADE, HOUSING & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Benton, Gardner, Hale, Heavey, Rasmussen, T. Sheldon and Winsley.

**Staff:** Susan Jones (786-7784)

**Background:** Currently, in payment for certain health care services provided by a nonparticipating provider, a health care service contractor is required to make checks payable jointly to the provider and the enrolled participant unless the participant provides evidence of prepayment. This requirement applies to the following health care service providers: chiropractors, dental hygienists, dentists, optometrists, osteopaths, pharmacists, physicians, emergency care providers, physical therapists, psychologists, and certain nurses and nurse practitioners. Denturists are not included. Concern exists that denturists are providing services and not being paid promptly or at all by some patients who receive checks in their names only.

**Summary of Bill:** In payment of services provided by a nonparticipating provider denturist, a health care service contractor must make checks payable jointly to the denturist and the enrolled participant, unless the participant provides evidence of prepayment. However, the health care service contractor may still issue payment in the name of the denturist only.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** This statute was overlooked when the denturist initiative was passed. Because denturist are not paid through insurance, some patients may be required to prepay

for denture services even when they have insurance. This may be hard on low income individuals or those on fixed incomes. This bill allows patients to get the full benefit of their insurance.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Steve Wehrly, Val Charron, Washington Denturist Association.