

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5807

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, March 3, 1999

**Title:** An act relating to health care coverage for retired or disabled school employees and retired state employees.

**Brief Description:** Expanding health care coverage for retired or disabled school or state employees.

**Sponsors:** Senators Franklin, Winsley, Fraser, Rasmussen, McAuliffe, Wojahn, Fairley, Thibaudeau, Kohl-Welles, Kline, Costa and B. Sheldon.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 3/3/99 [DP-WM].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.  
Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Johnson and Winsley.

**Staff:** Jonathan Seib (786-7427)

**Background:** Retired or disabled school district and education service district employees, and retired state employees generally have access to health care benefits through the Health Care Authority. However, those who did not join the program within their initial enrollment opportunity are currently locked out of the program by statute. This is true even where there was good cause for not joining during the initial enrollment period.

**Summary of Bill:** Retired or disabled school district and educational service district employees, or retired state employees, who are receiving a state retirement allowance as of September 30, 1993, and their dependents may purchase health care insurance coverage from the Health Care Authority.

Retired or disabled school district and education service district employees, or retired state employees who began receiving a retirement allowance on or after October 1, 1993, may enroll in health benefit plans under the Health Care Authority during annual enrollment periods established by the board, with demonstrated continuous employer group medical coverage from the time they became retired or disabled.

The authority must charge as premiums the cost of providing the insurance coverage, reduced by the amount of any existing subsidy.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 23, 1999.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2000.

**Testimony For:** Many retired teachers missed their initial enrollment opportunity due to confusion and poor communications. Some had other coverage at the time and had no need for additional state coverage. These people should not be locked out of the system forever because they legitimately failed to sign up during their initial enrollment period.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Helen Carlstrom, WEA retired; Leslie Main, Pat Hoban, Washington State Retired Teachers Association.