

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6121

As Passed Senate, February 9, 2000

Title: An act relating to the continuation of the diabetes cost reduction act.

Brief Description: Continuing the diabetes cost reduction act.

Sponsors: Senators Wojahn, Deccio, Thibaudeau, Winsley, Fairley, Rasmussen, Patterson and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/13/2000, 1/27/2000 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/9/2000, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Jonathan Seib (786-7427)

Background: The Diabetes Cost Reduction Act was passed in 1997, and became effective January 1, 1998. It requires state purchased health care, and health carriers licensed by the state who provide health insurance coverage which includes pharmacy benefits, to provide specified coverage for diabetic persons. These provisions do not apply to the Basic Health Plan, or to the plans identical to the Basic Health Plan which insurers are required to offer.

The act was subject to sunset review and will terminate on June 30, 2001.

The recently completed sunset review by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) recommended that "The 2000 Legislature should rescind sunset termination of the Diabetes Cost Reduction Act and direct the Washington State Department of Health to evaluate the impact of the act to present a final report by 2007 to JLARC."

Summary of Bill: The termination of the Diabetes Cost Reduction Act is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The continued health of many diabetes patients depends on the passage of this bill. The services covered under the law allow patients to maintain control of the disease and prevent serious complications. Prior to the enactment of the law in 1997, many

patients had to scramble for information about their disease because education was not a service covered by insurance. Treatment had to be weighed against personal finances, forcing many patients to wait to receive treatment, and causing much anxiety, fear and frustration. Since the act became effective in 1998, there have been very few misunderstandings and patients receive information about self-management within a few days of diagnosis. Continuation of the act is a sound long term investment that will allow many of the 317,000 people in the state to receive the equipment and education they need to fully respond to their own care.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Lara Telgen, Kathleen Albrecht, American Diabetes Association; Janet Wolfram, Washington Association of Diabetic Educators; Gail McGaffick, Washington State Dietetic Association; Patty Hayes, Department of Health.