

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6518

As Passed Senate, February 11, 2000

Title: An act relating to in-home services.

Brief Description: Modifying home health, home care, hospice, and in-home services.

Sponsors: Senators Wojahn, Winsley, Thibaudeau and Kohl-Welles; by request of Department of Health.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/19/2000, 1/31/2000 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/11/2000, 45-0.

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: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: Currently the Department of Health (DOH) issues three separate licenses for home health, hospice, and home care services under one chapter. These licenses require separate applications, surveys, renewal processes, and other administrative procedures.

Many of these agencies, however, provide two or more service categories which are separately licensed. Some regulation is redundant, and as in-home services have broadened, current regulatory language has not been updated to reflect changes in the industry.

Summary of Bill: Three license categories for home health, home care, and hospice agencies are combined into one in-home services agency– license. Several exemptions to this license are added to existing exemptions, including individuals who provide care through a direct agreement with the recipient at home, public health departments, case managers, and volunteers.

The department must adopt rules addressing specific in-home delivery of care policies. Additions to the current home care bill of rights include the right to complain without retaliation and full disclosure about the agency’s responsibilities regarding advance directives.

An explicit list of reasons the department may take enforcement action against a licensee are included. The department is given authority to take new enforcement actions against any entity engaging in the unlicensed operation of an in-home services agency.

A new type of hospice category, hospice care center, is established. These centers require a certificate of need (CON). Some exemptions to the CON requirement are stated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2000.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2002.

Testimony For: This bill will help streamline licensing for services provided to long-term care clients in their homes.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Gary Bennett, Dept. of Health; Gail McGaffick, Home Care Assn. of WA, WA State Hospice Organization; Mark Rake-Marona, WA State Hospice Organization; Blanche Jones, Home Care Assn. of WA.