
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6665

State of Washington

56th Legislature

2000 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Thibaudeau, Winsley, Wojahn and Kohl-Welles)

Read first time 02/04/00.

1 AN ACT Relating to the prevention of infectious dental disease;
2 amending RCW 70.119A.060; creating a new section; repealing RCW
3 57.08.012; and declaring an emergency.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that dental disease is
6 an infectious disease affecting children and adults. Tooth decay is,
7 by far, the most common and costly oral health problem in all age
8 groups. Yet, it is one of the most preventable diseases. It is one of
9 the principle causes of tooth loss from early childhood through middle
10 age. The legislature also finds that vulnerable populations with lower
11 incomes suffer disproportionately from dental infections. Baby-bottle
12 tooth decay is a severe type of early childhood decay that affects
13 babies and toddlers from low-income populations. A state survey by the
14 department of health found that baby-bottle decay was experienced by
15 thirteen percent of children in Washington's head start and early
16 childhood assistance programs. These dental infections cause extreme
17 pain and discomfort as well as interfering with an individual's ability
18 to eat and to function effectively, causing children to miss school and
19 interfering with adults' job productivity.

1 The legislature finds that fluoride is a naturally occurring
2 element present in all water, and that fluoridation is simply the
3 adjustment of the fluoride levels to the optimal level for fighting
4 tooth decay. Fluoridation is a common community health measure that
5 benefits children and adults. Fluoride helps prevent dental infections
6 and tooth decay. Community water fluoridation is the safest, most
7 cost-effective, and most equitable method of reducing tooth decay in
8 communities throughout the country and in Washington state. The
9 legislature declares that this act is necessary to protect public
10 health and safety.

11 **Sec. 2.** RCW 70.119A.060 and 1995 c 376 s 3 are each amended to
12 read as follows:

13 (1) In order to assure safe and reliable public drinking water and
14 to protect the public health, public water systems shall:

15 (a) Protect the water sources used for drinking water;

16 (b) Provide treatment adequate to assure that the public health is
17 protected;

18 (c) Provide and effectively operate and maintain public water
19 system facilities;

20 (d) Plan for future growth and assure the availability of safe and
21 reliable drinking water;

22 (e) Provide the department with the current names, addresses, and
23 telephone numbers of the owners, operators, and emergency contact
24 persons for the system, including any changes to this information, and
25 provide to users the name and twenty-four hour telephone number of an
26 emergency contact person; and

27 (f) Take whatever investigative or corrective action is necessary
28 to assure that a safe and reliable drinking water supply is
29 continuously available to users.

30 (2) Wherever the content of public water supplies serving more than
31 one thousand residential connections contains fluoride levels less than
32 the amount recommended for decay prevention, the person, firm,
33 corporation, or municipality having jurisdiction over the supply shall
34 adjust the fluoride level of the water to the level recommended for
35 optimal dental health. However, any city, county, public utility
36 district, or water district and its water system are not required to
37 make such adjustments upon the adoption of an ordinance or resolution
38 called by a petition of twenty-five percent of the registered voters of

1 the city, county, public utility district, or water district who voted
2 in the last general election. No such ordinance or resolution may be
3 adopted by a city, county, public utility district, or water district
4 that receives or has contracted to receive its water supply or any part
5 of its water supply from another political subdivision, or public or
6 private entity, which adds fluoride to its water supply in compliance
7 with this subsection or which has only fluoridated water to supply such
8 political subdivision or private entity.

9 (3) The department of health shall adopt rules for the
10 implementation of this act.

11 (4) No new public water system may be approved or created unless:
12 (a) It is owned or operated by a satellite system management agency
13 established under RCW 70.116.134 and the satellite system management
14 system complies with financial viability requirements of the
15 department; or (b) a satellite management system is not available and
16 it is determined that the new system has sufficient management and
17 financial resources to provide safe and reliable service. The approval
18 of any new system that is not owned by a satellite system management
19 agency shall be conditioned upon future management or ownership by a
20 satellite system management agency, if such management or ownership can
21 be made with reasonable economy and efficiency, or upon periodic review
22 of the system's operational history to determine its ability to meet
23 the department's financial viability and other operating requirements.
24 The department and local health jurisdictions shall enforce this
25 requirement under authority provided under this chapter, chapter
26 70.116, or 70.05 RCW, or other authority governing the approval of new
27 water systems by the department or a local jurisdiction.

28 ~~((+3))~~ (5) The department and local health jurisdictions shall
29 carry out the rules and regulations of the state board of health
30 adopted pursuant to RCW 43.20.050(2)(a) and other rules adopted by the
31 department relating to public water systems.

32 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. RCW 57.08.012 (Fluoridation of water
33 authorized) and 1988 c 11 s 2 are each repealed.

34 NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. This act is necessary for the immediate
35 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the

1 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
2 immediately.

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