

5425-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Thibaudeau, Long, Wojahn, Winsley, Costa, Oke, Franklin, McCaslin, Kohl-Welles, Swecker, Hargrove, Prentice, McAuliffe, Fairley, Kline, Fraser, Haugen, Eide, Goings, Brown, Shin, Jacobsen, Patterson, Bauer, Gardner, Heavey, B. Sheldon, T. Sheldon, Rasmussen, Loveland, Hale, Spanel and Snyder)

Brief Title: Establishing parity for mental health services.

SB 5425-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Finds that the costs for leaving mental disorders untreated or undertreated are enormous, and often include: Decreased job productivity, increased job turnover, loss of employment, increased disability costs, deteriorating school performance, increased use of other health care services, treatment delays leading to more costly treatments, suicide, family breakdown and impoverishment, and institutionalization, whether in hospitals, juvenile detention, jails, or prisons.

Declares that it is no longer cost-effective to treat persons with mental disorders differently than persons with medical and surgical disorders. The cost to our children, families, businesses, and society as a whole is too high.

Declares an intent to require insurance coverage at parity for mental health services, which means that this coverage be delivered under the same terms and conditions as medical and surgical coverage.

Repeals RCW 48.21.240, 48.44.340, and 48.46.290.