

5512-S

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

Brief Title: Requiring health plans that cover prescription drugs to cover the cost of prescription contraceptives.

SB 5512-S.E - DIGEST

(AS OF SENATE 2ND READING 3/9/99)

Declares an intent to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and ensure access to contraceptive services in health plans that cover prescription drugs and outpatient health services. The legislature also intends to further the goal of eliminating sex discrimination in health benefits for women.

Provides that no individual health care provider, religiously sponsored health carrier, or health care facility may be required by law or contract in any circumstances to participate in the provision of or payment for prescription contraceptive drugs and devices and outpatient contraceptive services if they object to doing so for reason of conscience or religion.

Declares that health carriers that are not religiously sponsored shall allow enrollees whose health care provider or plan-designated health care facility declines to participate in the provision of contraceptive health care services to use another health care provider or health care facility with whom the plan contracts to ensure timely access to qualified providers within the local community. If all of the providers or facilities with whom the carrier contracts within the enrollee's local community decline to participate in the provision of contraceptive health care services, the carrier shall contract with a provider or facility within the enrollee's local community that will provide such services.