

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2703

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to the study of the effects of fluoridation of public water supplies.

Brief Description: Studying the costs and benefits of fluoride in public water supplies.

Sponsors: Representatives Darneille, Skinner, Cody and Wood.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/7/02 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Department of Health to study the benefits of fluoridating the state's public water supply systems.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Schual-Berke, Vice Chair; Ballasiotes, Benson, Darneille, Edwards and Ruderman.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Campbell, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Conway and Skinner.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background:

Dental disease is prevalent among the state population, and there is a question whether the fluoridation of public water supply systems has an effect of reducing dental caries.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Department of Health is required to study the costs and benefits of the fluoridation of

public water supply systems as a means to prevent dental disease. The study is specifically to review medicaid and other public health costs by regions in the state to determine whether the incidence of treating dental caries in regions with fluoridation varies from those regions without fluoridation. The department must submit a report of its findings to the legislature by December 31, 2002. The study is funded through foundation grants.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

A provision was added to fund the study through foundation grants.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: The costs and benefits of fluoridation should be evaluated.

Testimony Against: The study should identify and evaluate the possible health risks as well as the benefits of fluoridation.

Testified: (Support) Denny Homer, Washington State Dental Association; and Melissa Johnson, Washington State Dental Hygienists' Association.

(Oppose) Jeff Green, Citizens for Safe Drinking Water; Lynne Campbell, Oregon Citizens for Safe Drinking Water; Emily Kalweit, Washington Citizens for Safe Drinking Water; and Randy Mentzer.