

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2011

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 28, 2001

Title: An act relating to public psychiatric facilities.

Brief Description: Clarifying licensing for public psychiatric facilities.

Sponsors: By Representatives Campbell, Darneille, Bush, Lantz and Cody.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/19/01, 3/28/01 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Costa, Fraser, Parlette and Winsley.

Staff: Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

Background: In the summer of 2000, Puget Sound Hospital in Pierce County filed bankruptcy. The Pierce County Regional Support Network (PCRSN) purchased the Puget Sound Hospital facility. PCRSN intends to convert the facility from a fully-licensed acute care hospital into a mental health and chemical dependency evaluation and treatment facility. Surgical and non-behavioral health services are not provided at the facility.

Current statutory provisions that govern licensing are divided into categories that do not fit the current legal and operational status of the new facility. Psychiatric hospitals are governed under statutory provisions that refer to "private establishments." The new facility is publicly owned by the county and arguably would not withstand legal challenges to its state licensing credentials.

Summary of Amended Bill: The private establishments provisions that permit Department of Health regulation of psychiatric hospitals is amended to include county and municipally owned facilities.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: Publicly owned facilities are specified as county and city owned.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This is important legislation to enable current facilities to continue to operate. Department of Health supports the legislation. This bill provides community based care alternatives.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Gary Bennett, Dept. of Health (pro); Jean Wessman, Assn. of Counties (pro); Karl Brimner, Mental Health Div. (pro); George Walk, Pierce County (pro).