

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5186

As Passed Senate, March 9, 2001

Title: An act relating to department of social and health services' family planning services.

Brief Description: Modifying department of social and health services' family planning services.

Sponsors: Senators Thibaudeau, Winsley, Costa and Kohl-Welles; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/22/01, 2/7/01 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/9/01, 28-19.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Jonathan Seib (786-7427)

Background: Through Medicaid, the state provides family planning services and birth control methods to individuals meeting standard Medicaid eligibility criteria. Ninety percent of the cost is paid by the federal government, with the remainder paid by the state. Women in families at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level who are otherwise ineligible for Medicaid also receive family planning services at the 90 percent federal match rate for two months following pregnancy. After that two-month period, these services are provided entirely at state expense for an additional ten months.

The state Basic Health Plan (BHP) also covers family planning services. The BHP is available on a state subsidized basis to those with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

The state Department of Health's (DOH) Family Planning and Reproductive Health Program also provides family planning services through funding to local family planning agencies. The DOH services are available for free to those in families at or under 100 percent of the federal poverty level, and on a subsidized basis to those from 101-250 percent of the federal poverty level. Services are paid for by the state, federal Title X funds, and other sources such as donations and client fees.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Social and Health services may, upon approval from the Federal Health Care Financing Administration, implement a waiver to provide family planning services for persons with family incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Family planning services includes all federal Food and Drug Administration-approved contraceptives, sterilization services, and medical services associated with use of contraceptive and sterilization services, educational services, intensive follow-up services to support contraceptive use, and interpretive services necessary to aid individuals to avoid unintended pregnancy.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: Increasing access to family planning services will benefit individuals and the community. Planned pregnancies lead to better outcomes for both parents and children. Reducing unintended pregnancies will save the state money on maternity costs it will otherwise have to cover.

Testimony Against: This bill will increase funding for services that could lead to the taking of a human life what some understand as an abortion. It will promote artificial means to prevent the conception of human life.

Testified: PRO: James Wilson, Medical Assistance Administration, DSHS; Theresa Conner, Planned Parenthood Affiliates of Washington; Melinda Reed, Washington State Council on Family Planing. CON: Michael Whitley, Washington State Catholic Conference.