

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESB 5198

As Reported by House Committee On:

Health Care

Title: An act relating to public hospital district recruitment and training.

Brief Description: Revising authority of public hospital districts to pay recruitment expenses and employee training and education expenses.

Sponsors: Senators Parlette, Winsley, Deccio, Thibaudeau, Keiser, Franklin and Brandland.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 3/20/03, 3/27/03 [DP].

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Allows reimbursement for travel and living expenses from public hospital districts to candidates for certain public hospital district positions to be extended to accompanying family members.
- Allows public hospital district contracts to include payment of health care training or education, including debt obligations, for employees or medical staff members in exchange for their services.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Benson, Campbell, Clibborn, Darneille, Moeller, Schual-Berke and Skinner.

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

Public hospital districts are types of municipal corporations that are authorized to operate hospitals and other health care facilities and provide other hospital and health care services within a specified community. In addition to operating hospitals, these services

may include nursing homes, extended care, long-term care, outpatient and rehabilitation facilities, and ambulance services.

As government entities, the authority of public hospital districts is specifically stated in statute. Under current law, public hospital districts may survey existing hospitals and health care facilities, manage property, lease facilities and equipment, borrow money, issue and sell bonds, and raise revenue through levies. Public hospital districts may also reimburse candidates for medical, superintendent, managerial, and technical positions for their travel and living expenses associated with attending an interview when an interview is deemed necessary or desirable to achieve adequate staffing. They may also enter into contracts, and employ staff including superintendents, attorneys, and other assistants and employees.

Summary of Bill:

The authority of public hospital districts to pay for the travel and living expenses of candidates for medical, superintendent, and other managerial and technical positions is expanded to include other health care practitioners and to include the expenses of family members accompanying the candidate.

The authority of public hospital districts to enter into contracts is modified to specifically allow contracts with current or prospective employees, physicians, or other health care providers to provide payment or reimbursement for health care training or education expenses, including debt obligations, in exchange for their services.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill will help hospital districts recruit and retain more workers in underserved areas.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Parlette, prime sponsor; Lisa Thatcher, Association of Washington Public Hospitals; and Madeleine Thompson, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.