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**Health Care Committee**

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**HB 1178**

**Brief Description:** Requiring medically accurate information in sex education courses.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Schual-Berke, Skinner, Cody, Hankins, Moeller, Chase, Darneille, Upthegrove, Hunt, McCoy, Grant, Cooper, Clibborn, Ruderman, Kenney, Wallace, Lantz, Hudgins, Pettigrew, Morrell, McDermott, Jarrett, Romero, Haigh, Hunter, Kagi, Conway and Simpson.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires all sexuality education courses taught with public funds to (1) provide medically accurate information; (2) teach that abstinence is the most effective way to prevent unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and AIDS; (3) provide statistics regarding contraceptives and their success at preventing pregnancy, AIDS, and sexually transmitted diseases; and (4) be age appropriate.
- Defines "medically accurate" as information supported by scientific research and published in peer-reviewed journals, where possible, and recognized as accurate and objective by expert professional organizations and government agencies.

**Hearing Date:** 1/30/03

**Staff:** Chris Blake (786-7392).

**Background:**

All public school curricula must teach the minimum requisites for good health, including methods to prevent exposure to and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. The Washington Administrative Code, however, allows local school boards to decide whether or not to have sex education or human sexuality courses in their districts. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 permits the use of federal funds to provide sex education or HIV prevention education in schools as long as the instruction is age appropriate and the health benefits or abstinence are part of the curriculum.

Applicants to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program must receive family planning information including alternatives to abortion and other available local teen pregnancy prevention programs.

**Summary of Bill:**

All sexuality education courses that are supported with public funds must provide medically accurate information. The classes must also teach that abstinence from sexual intercourse is the most effective way to prevent an unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and sexually transmitted AIDS. Courses must also provide statistics regarding the success and failure rates of different contraceptive devices in preventing pregnancy, AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases. Course materials and instruction must be age appropriate.

The term "medically accurate" is defined as information that is (1) supported by research conducted in accordance with scientific methods and published in peer-reviewed journals, where appropriate, and (2) recognized as accurate and objective by expert professional organizations and government agencies such as the American College of Obstetricians, the Department of Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 21, 2003.

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